

THE MONTH

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THE MONTH

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SEPTEMBER, 1938

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Problems of Czechoslovakia

THE great majority of English people have taken their summer holidays without undue fear that these would be interrupted by an outbreak of war, and have been more immediately interested in weather conditions than in foreign political complications. To most of them Bradman has been a more familiar figure than either Henlein or Hodza. A reasonable feeling prevails that the greater European Powers will not go to war over any major issue: it is the side issues which are more troublesome. The Spanish struggle, however, in spite of continued intervention even if on a smaller scale, is far less likely than was the case twelve months ago, to provoke a wider conflict. At present the point of greatest sensitiveness is undoubtedly Czechoslovakia. Since the advent of the Nazi regime and particularly after the incorporation of Austria in the Reich, the claims of its considerable German minority (three and a half out of fifteen million inhabitants as against seven and a half million Czechs) have been pressed with increasing vigour. Between their demands and the limit of concessions that the Czechs will tolerate there is, it has been said, an unbridgeable gulf. This statement is an extreme one. The position was indicated in February of this year in speeches by Herr Hitler and Dr. Hodza, the Prime Minister, who is recognized as a moderate and censured on that account by the more intransigent of his countrymen. The Germany of to-day, declared Herr Hitler, would look after the interests of the Reich, to which belonged "the protection of those fellow-Germans who live beyond our frontiers and are unable to secure for themselves the right to a general freedom, personal, political and ideological." Dr. Hodza replied that any such pretension with regard to the Germans in Czechoslovakia "would mean interference in the internal affairs of our State" and would be resisted "with all the forces at our command." An obvious difficulty arises from this demand for "ideological" freedom, referred to by the German

Chancellor and formulated in the eighth point of the Sudeten programme. This insists upon "full liberty to profess German nationality and political philosophy." At the Sudeten Congress, held at Eger on April 23rd, Herr Henlein asserted: "We solemnly and openly declare that our policy is inspired by the principles and ideas of National-Socialism. If Czech statesmen want to reach a permanent understanding with us Germans and with the German Reich, they will have to fulfil our demand for a complete revision of Czech foreign policy, which up to to-day has led the State into the ranks of the enemies of the German people." The difficulty was heightened in spectacular manner by the presence of 40,000 *Sudeten-deutschen* at the Breslau Gymnastic Festival (July 29th), when the same speaker declared on their behalf that while they were nationals of various Powers, they remained citizens of the great German nation and voluntarily placed themselves under its laws. Their demands concern, therefore, both internal and external policy. Internally they insist upon complete equality of status, which they have not always in practice experienced, and a large measure of local autonomy: externally they require the abandonment by Czechoslovakia of the defensive agreement with Soviet Russia and the adoption of a policy in consonance with that of Berlin, or at least of a benevolent neutrality like that of Poland. In the eyes of the more nationalist Czechs the acceptance of either of these demands is incompatible with Czechoslovakia's position as an independent State.

The Runciman Mission

THE arrival of Lord Runciman in Prague has been greeted on either side with reasonably good grace. Earlier in the year the German Press was by no means complimentary to Great Britain's efforts to smoothe out these difficulties. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* (May 25th) declared that England was engaged in "stacking the cards, so that in the event of a catastrophe the old game could be played: 'Germany is guilty'." Lord Runciman's position is almost unprecedented. He is nominally a private person though really with the prestige of the British Government behind him. He is no arbiter but just an independent adviser whose ultimate opinion and judgment will not be binding on anyone. And yet he is serving in no undecided manner the cause

of European peace. It has sometimes been made a charge against Mr. Chamberlain that he is out of sympathy with the League of Nations and is too ready to negotiate with non-League Powers. As *The Times* points out in an editorial (August 4th), mediation is one of the main functions of the League and Lord Runciman is endeavouring to mediate between the rival parties in Czechoslovakia, that is, in a dispute in which one side at least would not have accepted an intermediary appointed by the League. He has made an excellent start, having interviewed President Benes and Hodza, the Prime Minister, as well as the leaders of the *Sudetendeutschen* and the non-Nazi Germans, represented by Herr Jacksch. What is more, he seems to have won the confidence of all parties to the dispute: and the tribute of a Sudeten paper to his "fairness and impartiality" is a happy augury. The difficulty is that he will have to reconcile points of view that, at first seeming, are too definitely opposed. The German minority has laid down its eight-point programme and insists that this must be accepted as a basis for discussion. The Nationalities Statute proposed by the Government does not appear to them to go sufficiently far. These proposals advocate the establishment of schools for minorities in accordance with their numbers: the employment of the appropriate languages: and the setting up of four Provincial Diets for Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, Slovakia and Ruthenia that shall control all details of local administration. The Sudeten representatives have answered that these so-called concessions have been long overdue, indeed were guaranteed to them by the Peace Treaties twenty years ago, and that the formation of the Diets will merely multiply the minority positions by five: for they are so arranged as to give a Czech or Slovak majority in every case over Germans, Poles and Hungarians. Their own demand is for local Government by German bodies in predominantly German areas. Even here the question is none too simple for the German region is no continuous one but divided into six districts with mixed population in between. The points of view are difficult to reconcile. The Germans wish to manage their own affairs on what seems to be a basis of national autonomy within the State. The Czech Government feels quite unable to allow what would be a State within a State, more especially because of the claim to "ideological" freedom, that is the profession of Nazi doctrines. There is great need for good will and mutual confidence, and here, un-

fortunately, we must not be unduly optimistic. This need for compromise was stressed by Lord Runciman in an early speech. "Permanent peace," he reminded his hearers, "can only be the outcome of mutual consent. Any settlement presupposes good will on both sides." The danger is, not so much that this good will is wanting, as that its presence may have been obscured by national intransigence and the feeling on both sides that there are forces outside the country, ready to give them moral, if not material, support.

Quo usque tandem . . . ?

IT must not be taken for granted that the German minority is being deliberately recalcitrant and overbearing. They have definite grievances and this has been admitted by no less ardent a Czech than President Benes himself. A promise was made at Versailles that the principles of Swiss equality would be extended to the non-Czech peoples : and this promise has been very grudgingly, if at all, fulfilled. To quote but a small instance, the Language Law of February 29, 1920, which professed to interpret the Treaty, provided that a minority must represent more than 20 per cent before it might use its own language in dealing with local officials or with the courts. This provision excluded, for example, the 40,000 German inhabitants of Prague who failed to attain the required percentage. Further, Czech officials were drafted into German-speaking districts with little regard for local sentiment. But there must somewhere be a limit to the claims of national minorities within an established State. In Czechoslovakia the Germans number about 3,500,000, the Czechs 7,500,000 and the Slovaks 2,500,000 : in addition there are 700,000 Hungarians, 550,000 Ruthenians and 85,000 Poles. The Hungarian minority has put forward certain proposals according to which the languages of the six peoples, mentioned above, are to be recognized as of equal standing : no matter in what part of the country he is living, a person will be entitled to use his native tongue in dealings with local and other authorities : and further, all documents must be published in the six languages and the Army remodelled on national lines. One shudders to think what qualifications will be demanded of officials, were such proposals to be accepted.

Qui mange du Pape

THE importance attributed by the Holy Father to Catholic Action and the place he considers it to occupy in the very life of the Church have once again been emphasized in a remarkable address to the students of Propaganda on July 28th. "Catholic Action," insisted the Supreme Pontiff, "is Catholic life: and Catholic life is an activity fashioned by charity and virtue and by the law of God." Catholic Action, he continued, is within the Church and "is identified with the Church," since it is Catholic life, and the task of forming such a life has been entrusted to it. Dissociated from the Church, it would be meaningless: were it to lose its contact with and due submission to the hierarchy, it would at the same time be deprived of its reason for existence. Therefore, it is impossible for the enemies of the Church to pretend that they are opposed to Catholic Action without meaning in any sense to injure the Church herself. As is well known, this distinction has been frequently made use of in Germany in order to "camouflage" anti-Catholic measures. The pretext is that such measures are directed merely against "political Catholicism" and not against the Church in her religious character. On occasions—and the last of these is of recent date—a similar distinction has been invoked in Italy, and there has been interference with Catholic Action with the usual plea that the Church is not concerned. Such a distinction the Holy Father condemns as hypocritical and as a mere cloak for a more direct attack. "Whoever strikes at Catholic Action, strikes at the Church, because he aims his blow at Catholic life." And further, "He who aims this blow at Catholic Action, strikes at the Pope." His tone then changed to one of grave warning "*E chi colpisce il Papa muore.*" This is a truth so often exemplified in the course of the history of the Church, guided by the Providence of God and founded upon an unassailable rock. Whoever strikes at and does violence to the Pope, will fail in his attack and perish of his very presumption. "Qui mange du Pape"—and here the Holy Father recalled a familiar French saying—"en meurt." At a more recent audience (August 18th) to a group of women members of *Azione Cattolica* from Udine he reiterated his earnest conviction that Catholic Action was nothing but Catholic life, "the life of the Church which lives and perpetuates throughout the centuries the mystic life of Christ." This

consideration of Catholic Action as Catholic life should encourage and inspire English Catholics in their efforts to organize and co-operate in genuine Catholic Action.

Race Doctrines spread

IN the same address the Holy Father had occasion to refer to the racial theories which Signor Farinacci and a group of University professors were endeavouring to introduce into Italy. Catholics, he asserted, could not think in terms of racialism, still less in the spirit of that "exaggerated racialism and nationalism which signify the raising of barriers between men and men and between people and people." Why, he asked, should Italy deem it advisable to copy Germany on this point? Two days later (July 31st), Signor Mussolini, speaking to a camp of young Fascists at Forlì, declared that "in the question of race we shall go straight ahead [*noi tiremo diritto*—an expression much in evidence during the Abyssinian war]. To say that Fascism has imitated someone or something is absurd." These references to racial problems were occasioned by the publication earlier in the month of a series of propositions professing to fix the Fascist attitude towards such problems. Among these were the statements that the concept of race is purely biological, that there is a pure Italian race of Aryan character and it is "this ancient purity of blood" which is the highest title to nobility of the Italian. The obvious conclusion was drawn, namely, that the Jews, since they are of non-European origin, must be considered as outside the racial pale. A number of anti-Jewish articles have appeared in the Fascist Press, and there is talk of certain discriminative measures, probably with the intention of keeping Jewish refugees out of the country. An interesting letter from the President of the Jewish Historical Society in England (*The Times*, July 26th) rejects the notion that the Jews have been unassimilable in Italy. "The fact is that they have been assimilated during the entire course of the past twenty centuries perpetually and (from the Jewish point of view) far too completely. There can be very few, among the urban population of the country at least, in whose veins there runs no Jewish blood." The last sentence is open to serious dispute but it may be taken for granted that the admixture of various strains that is so evident in Italy—German in the north, for example, and Greek and Spanish in

the south—as well as the good sense and friendliness of the Italian people will not allow these racial tendencies too unpleasant a development. The professors who were responsible for the original pronouncement explained that Italian blood might be crossed with that of any European nation without losing its purity. All that is suggested, therefore, is the existence of a mild and probably an artificial anti-Semitism.

Saint Stephen's Crown

ON August 19th the ninth centenary of the death of St. Stephen was celebrated throughout Hungary. His yearly anniversary is observed as a national holiday on the 20th of that month, though in the Roman missal the feast falls on September 2nd. For the Hungarians this feast-day is an historic event. The Saint's name is associated not only with the development of Christianity in the Danube valley but also with the consolidation of the Magyar tribes into a strong and well-knit State. In addition, he was its first crowned King and the crown was sent to him by Pope Sylvester. The national devotion to the person of St. Stephen and the Holy Crown is thus a happy augury for harmonious co-operation between State and Church. It has been well said that this crown attained a mystic status superior to that of its wearer and, more than the King himself, became the true symbol of Hungarian nationhood. Hungary was a Crownedom rather than a Kingdom and accordingly the absence of a King to-day does not produce the unreal situation that might have been expected. The actual ornament has had an adventurous history. At one time it was stolen by the Bohemian King and sent as a present to his Bavarian cousin: it was left in relative security under the Turkish occupation, buried by an adherent of Kossuth after 1848 and ultimately advertised for sale in a German newspaper during the Bolshevik interregnum under Bela Kun. To-day it is watched over in the Royal Palace of Buda and has a special bodyguard of its own. The guarantee of a rightful King was that he had been crowned with it at Székesfejervár, the medieval Alba Regia, founded by St. Stephen himself. Consequently it was at Székesfejervár that the two Houses of Parliament met to celebrate the centenary. St. Stephen had established there his annual "law days" out of which the Parliament gradually developed. Its last meeting in that city took place in the memorable year of 1526 after the defeat of Mohacs when, for common defence against

the Turks, the crowns of Austria, Hungary and Bohemia were vested in a Hapsburg prince and Austria-Hungary was born. Typical of the close association of State and Church was the further condition that the royal coronation, to be recognized, must be performed by the Primate, the Archbishop of Esztergom. Cardinal Seregi, the present Primate and bishop of that See, speaking at the Székesfejérvár festivities, declared that St. Stephen's work had endured because it was built on eternal principles and was a successful blend of old customs and new ideals. Hungarians to-day, he concluded, must follow his example and try to reconcile modern ideas with the ancient legal and moral principles embodied in the constitution of their Christian kingdom.

Nazis in Hungary

BUT Hungary is not without its Nazi problem. It does not spring primarily from the large German minority, though this has, not unnaturally, shown signs of awakening race-consciousness, but from certain Hungarian sections. Three reasons are given for its growth. In the first place, the annexation of Austria has brought the country into closer proximity to the Reich, and it is thought by many that Hungary would be more likely to realize her territorial claims, which all the people have at heart, through a German alliance: her other neighbours, members of the Little Entente, are obviously unsympathetic towards these claims. Secondly, there is a widespread anti-Jewish feeling, in part a legacy from the Bela Kun experiment, and due also to the persuasion that in impoverished post-war Hungary only the Jews have prospered. This can hardly be made an unqualified reproach since before the war the commercial and business field was very largely left to them. Thirdly, there is considerable dissatisfaction in country districts; much of the peasantry is landless and ready to listen to Nazi promises that they will divide up the large estates into smaller holdings. Internally the native Nazi movements have been re-organized, and strengthened by the fusion of the two most important groups into one party. The post of Führer has been left to Major Szalasi, leader of the Hungarist section, at the moment serving a term of three years' imprisonment. There is a familiar ring about the programme put forward by them. It claims, of course, that the Magyar race was predestined to play a leading part in the Danubian valley and demands the

restoration of the territories lost to Hungary by the Peace Treaties. It employs the language of the distributists, insisting that Hungary has need of many small fortunes rather than a few large ones. The Jews are attacked and their influence in the Press and theatre and literature is to be eradicated. The main basis of the new State would be the racially purest group, the peasants. Finally, they both renounce the use of violence to gain their ends and assert that they will always remain faithful to Christianity, which is in their blood. Though the Nazi movement has certainly gathered strength, it is not yet formidable and may never be so. We may remark that similar professions were made by the German Nazis before their advent to power. The partition of large estates was promised: but it is uncertain to what extent this has been fulfilled. In general, the movement has shown itself definitely more national than socialist. They also—it is well to remember—made profession of a “positive” Christianity: this is now seen to be “positive” enough in all conscience but not in the very least Christian.

Austria Infelix

WHY is it that a romantic brigand so easily becomes a hero? To the pre-war schoolboy the escape or enterprise of a Dick Turpin or a Raffles was matter for rejoicing, not disappointment. In fictional experiences we are seldom as sympathetic towards the forces of law and order as in more normal life. In fact, one of the many merits of detective stories is that they enlist our interests on the side of law rather than the law-breaker. But it is in political causes that this inversion of the moral sense is most noticeable. A plain murderer to-day and to-morrow a national martyr . . . such is the swift change of values. And yet what justification could be urged for the murder of Chancellor Dollfuss in 1934? It was the crime of a few misguided men, carried through in brutal manner, for the Chancellor was allowed to linger on in agony, unattended either by priest or doctor. There was little popular sympathy with the attempted revolution except for minor disturbances in Styria and Carinthia: public opinion reprobated the crime and regarded its victim as one who had died in the service of his country. But now the martyr's crown that sat worthily on the head of Dollfuss has been snatched away and placed upon those of his murderers. It is an axiom of the Bolshevik “moral” system that whatever

further the Communist cause, is true: we have now been shown that for the Nazi, that is noble and glorious which is done or perpetrated in his cause, however criminal it be judged by objective moral standards. The elaborate ceremonies staged in Vienna to commemorate the "deed of glory" of Planetta, Holzweber and companions, and the later execution of some of them, was an insult to the once Imperial city and the sentiments of the former Austrians, and was a symbol of the planting of a Prussian heel upon a Catholic land. Among the celebrations, we understand, was a Mass of thanksgiving held in Salzburg Cathedral. We take it that the real Mass-intention was one of Requiem, for the repose of the souls of both murderers and murdered.

The Austrian Church

THE situation of the Church in Austria is still not clear though it is evident that the measures taken to reduce her influence in Germany, are already being extended to the newly occupied provinces. The attitude adopted in March by Cardinal Innitzer is still little understood outside his own country and has been severely criticized: and the suggestion has been made in secular and non-Catholic papers that a small national Catholic Church is in process of formation on the Gallican model. For this, however, there is no evidence. What is more likely is a series of secessions from the Church. There was always more danger of this in Austria than Germany. For in the latter country Catholics have felt themselves continually on the defensive and have known how to consolidate their forces: whereas in the former there were many "liberal" Catholics who were satisfied with the convenience of a State religion. Even before the war, from 1899 to 1914, some 55,000 lapsed from the Church to Protestantism and 20,000 more to the Old Catholic belief, under the propaganda of the *Los von Rom Bewegung*: whereas in 1934, to take the year of greatest leakage since the war, 25,000 forsook their allegiance to the Catholic Church: and since March of this year the number of lapses has been considerable. Even in Protestant circles such conversions are regarded as merely political, and as a profession of German racialism rather than of religious belief. It seems vain to expect that better treatment will be accorded to the Church in Austria than has been given her in Germany. We may only hope that there will be wise and courageous leadership in this new case, as there has

been in the old. Finally, it were far better to refrain from criticism of the Austrian hierarchy: to say the very least, such criticism should be postponed till the issues are more clearly seen.

Social Study and Action

THE Catholic Social Guild may well feel that it deserves congratulation both upon the success of its Oxford Summer School and the steady record of its achievement during the past year. It has now a membership of 3,661 and hopes "soon to have that modest increase of a thousand more members—for which we have asked—the least figure necessary to enable us to carry on." A growth in the number of study circles is most encouraging: there are now no less than 379 of them at work. A new experiment of considerable promise is a small society of Catholic employers who meet for the discussion of social principles and are in contact with similar Catholic societies in other countries. In his presidential message read at the annual meeting, Archbishop Williams recalled the fact that the Guild existed to promote the study of social questions on Catholic lines and that it was impossible to work out the application of Catholic principles to actual social conditions without effort and serious study. The Social Guild is in need of greater support and deserves, and more than deserves, all the support it can obtain. Turning from social study to social enterprise, mention might be made of the new Stonyhurst Club for Boys which is soon to be inaugurated, with the fullest approval of His Eminence, in Kensal New Town. As in a previous experiment at Hoxton, the Society of the Sacred Heart is to co-operate, by running the Barat Club for Girls in the same parish. An appeal has been made to Old Stonyhurst Boys, inviting them in earnest and inspiring words, to take part in what is both a Catholic and a national effort. In a letter contained in the booklet issued by the Committee, Father Martindale emphasizes the vital need of social action in general and in that part of London in particular. There is, he states, a minimum of 2,000 professed Catholics in the district, but probably for every one of these there are five who have lapsed. Referring to the club work of some other settlements which inoculate young men with all that is Red, he adds: "What I see on our side is truth and inertia: on the other side, I see nonsense, and indeed blasphemy, but intense conviction and energy." The

new Stonyhurst club offers to all Old Boys a splendid opportunity of proving Father Martindale wrong and of displaying those qualities of charity and apostolic zeal which it is the privilege, and, indeed, the duty, of every Catholic to manifest. And though the appeal is made more directly to them, may it also awaken sympathy and interest in far wider circles.

Mr. Noyes and Voltaire

THE publicity given to the supposed condemnation of Mr. Noyes's work on Voltaire has been as unfortunate as it was premature. It has occasioned of course the usual remarks concerning intolerance and obscurantism from those for whom toleration can be a cloak for the widest confusion and uncertainty. And, indeed, where there is question of religious truth and error, tolerance is a word that may be grievously misapplied. The facts of the case seem simple enough. Cardinal Hinsley, speaking with the documents before him, assured the readers of *The Times* (August 11th) that "there has been no condemnation" and that "there is question only of some emendments, the nature of which will be discussed later between the author and myself." The author understands, as do all Catholics, that he is subject to obedience and that he might be informed by competent authority that part of his writing was contrary to Catholic teaching, and must accordingly be withdrawn. He is well aware that the Holy Office has the right to censure and condemn a book and that such action would not be taken except on very serious grounds. He is not aggrieved at the intervention itself but at what appears to him to be its inconsiderate manner. In the original letter which provoked the later correspondence Lord Charnwood asserted that the book is not closely connected with "distinctive doctrines of the Church of Rome": if it were, he continued, "condemnation passed upon it by authorities of that Church would be no business of any outsider." It may well be remarked that the Church is not concerned merely with what are here called her distinctive doctrines but also with wider teaching that embraces the *praeambula fidei* and moral principles, and that the Holy Office is a better judge of what appertains to or touches these doctrines than the numerous correspondents of *The Times*. We trust that the matter in dispute will be adjusted as soon as possible, without further, no doubt well-intentioned but unhelpful comment.

OUR FRIENDSHIP

1914 — 1918 — 1938

PARIS . . . AT THE DEPARTURE OF THEIR MAJESTIES

FOUR days of festival and ceremony which memory will long treasure . . . and now France listens in silence to an *Au Revoir* spoken by King George VI. It is the particular spirit of this moment which I should like to grasp and analyse.

I remember Paris in April, 1914. Everywhere excitement, enthusiasm universal. The crowds flocked to the banks of the Seine to welcome and salute King George V. It was one of those marvellous days of spring when Paris has a charm that is unrivalled anywhere in the world. I can see again the *Champs Elysées*, the *Place de la Concorde*, the *Pont Alexandre*, the *Quai d'Orsay* . . . a sequence of settings without parallel . . . bathed in all their splendour to greet the visitor from overseas. The royal procession, moving amid the flashing accoutrements of its attendant escort, appeared to leave a wake of brightness in its train. Paris and France experienced then one of those significant hours in which the course of history appears of a sudden to be altered. No one who had not lived in that country from 1890, when France still felt the humiliation and isolation of defeat, then in 1900, at the dawn of friendship with Russia, and finally, in 1913, when the *Entente Cordiale* was at last proclaimed . . . can picture the emotion that shook a whole people when, after the visit of President Poincaré to England, they saw the English Sovereign bring with him to Paris the guarantee of friendship with his people.

We did not then realize how near April was to be to August. And yet it cannot be gainsaid that during those days of celebration something like a tremor of premonition ran through the mass of the people, as though they were already conscious of the catastrophe to come. Nevertheless, the English friendship, now added to the alliance with Russia, lent us strength and comfort and we knew then that, should war be hurled upon us, there would be friends in arms at our side to check and break its savage onslaught.

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April, 1914 . . . August, 1914 . . . with what followed we are familiar. To-day there springs to my mind a picture that I can never forget. It is of twenty years ago, to this very day. We had just been thrown, on July 15, 1918, into the Battle of the Marne. From our trenches on its right bank we were attacking along the Forest of Courton, in the direction of Fismes : this was the village of my mother. For ten days we had been fighting in a thick wood, broken by gullies, in which the enemy resisted with unrelenting fierceness (on the 17th I saw there my first wounded American, quite a young volunteer, the driver of an ambulance : I have never seen a man so elated and so happy). The battle grew in intensity : German artillery pounded away at the wood, laid down a heavy barrage day and night along every line of approach, splitting and breaking down the oak trees and throwing up masses of brown earth.

In turn the French attacked, then the Italians, then the English. . . After one of these attacks that had taken its grim toll of lives, it was the turn of the Italians to advance. This they did with an impetuous, heroic rush . . . to the cries *Avanti, Avanti*, shouted by their officers whose eloquence was the equal of their courage : *Avanti per la gloria! Avanti per la vittoria! Avanti per la libertà! Avanti per l'Italia! Avanti per la Francia! . . .*

The next morning in the thick depths of the forest, I saw the Black Watch assemble to take over the assault. In the area swept by the barrage they advanced in column of fours (you understand . . . in column of fours—and under a barrage). At the march, mind you, and with their rifles slung across their shoulders : section by section : in utter silence. At the head of each platoon marched a young officer, dressed immaculately, a cane in his hand : five paces behind him his men : and five paces further back the machine gun carriages : a further five paces in the rear the baggage limbers. It was just as if at a review : with firm, easy and untroubled step, their heads well up, they marched directly to our relief posts and there deployed in attack formation. Then, at the zero hour, just in front of us a young Scottish lieutenant sprang up, and as he turned to lead the attack, he waved his cane to encourage the men, shouting out as a salute . . . *Vive la France!*

.

I understand now why the vision of this young officer, killed may be in that very action, haunts me to-day.

"This friendly country," said King George at the *Elysée*, "to which Great Britain is attached by so many memories and sacrifices cherished in common . . ."

It is the same accent of high courtesy, of deep and calm friendship. And it is to this that France has replied in the like tone, that is firmer and more lasting than any outburst of emotion . . . *Vive le Roi! Vive la Reine!* The greeting came as though from one throat. There was no voice that did not show that modulation of deference and withal of affection.

"Our friendship" the King has said. His manner of speech was so simple: he spoke as friends are wont to speak, as good friends talk. They do not measure words nor fear what they are saying. They do not emphasize, do not exaggerate. Their tone is natural; there is no effort, no strain in their articulation; they have no need to heighten their tone. They speak not to convince and persuade themselves, nor do they call the world to witness. Least of all is their pronouncement a gesture of defiance thrown at others.

"Our friendship," said King George, "is not directed against any other Power. . ."

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What has impressed all those who have lived through these July days in Paris, has been, much more than the enthusiastic welcome and the magnificence of the fêtes, the sense of an unwonted atmosphere of joyful peace.

I have known Paris in its days of feverish excitement as well as in its days of wrath. I remember its streets deserted and empty of vehicles on August 4, 1914, and those same streets red with the reflection of burning buildings on February 6, 1934. I can truly say I have not for many years seen the city at once as calm and as festive, so cordial, so truly and deeply happy. The people in the street—that is, the real people, all the people—were happy—(by day under the brilliant sunshine that smiled upon the visit: by night when the city was ablaze with illumination)—happy that the English King had come to be among them: happy to greet him throughout the elaborate programme arranged in his honour, and happy to return his courtesy. For eight days Paris was in a state of preparation: the monuments, the *Concorde*, the *Palais Bourbon*. . . But when do you imagine that I first

awoke to what was happening? Restrain your smile. It was one morning, July 15th, when I met the "tilbury" of Gervais (the famous cream cheese that is always delivered by such vans to the sound of trotting horses). The time was 6.55 a.m., for I meet it every morning at that hour, just by the corner of the *Rue de Babylone*. Rapidly and lightly it went by with two flags to decorate it: the tricolor and the Union Jack. That morning, precisely at 6.55 a.m., I realized of a sudden that France was awaiting the visit of the King. And I mean not the official France, but the France of the "petit Gervais," just simply France.

The spirit of joy provoked by the King's arrival had a quality that was remarkable. It was dignified and courteous, with a note of good fellowship: there was no ostentation, no hint of threat towards any other people. The people of France were greatly moved by the royal visit: and this not merely because it signified the alliance of the two Powers but still more because, in a world given over to upstart rule and unmannerly brutality, it was the gesture of a king who is a *grand seigneur*, emphasized by a queen's smile, whose note, beyond all else, was graciousness.

They were days that have become all too rare in the modern world: days when one could converse in a friendly tone, with no call to bring down a heavy fist upon the table: days when might be sensed the notes of companionship and tradition and that exquisite charm and courtesy which is the surest mark of "race"! France is indeed sensible of the honour done her by Their Majesties. But she has been even more thrilled by this miracle, . . . in a Europe where brute force has become the law, and men are cowed and apprehensive . . . this wonder of a spontaneous courtesy and friendship. It made us feel that the dealings of nations might one day be brought back to the spirit of fine behaviour, of mutual reverence and good will.

Most assuredly will the alliance and friendship of England and France, expressed in no uncertain terms, need to be borne in mind by any nations who might be tempted to throw themselves too readily into rash and warlike enterprises. For close on ten years, both Europe and the Far East have been ravaged by adventurers of every kind who have introduced into a world, whose recent mourning after the Great War might at least have commanded their respect, an atmosphere of fear and insecurity and the manners of the barbarian. We

know full well to what a condition Revolution and Counter-Revolution have reduced us, one almost as brutal as the other, with their methods of violence and oppression. We have been shocked and disgusted by the spectacle of civil wars, of class-hatred preached and practised, of the hypocrisy of grasping Governments and the cynical exploitation of war for purposes of gain. We have been discouraged and ashamed; and we have sensed, too, the folly and yet the proximity of war.

These days of July, however, have cleared in part this troubled atmosphere, have been a pure delight because they have given us hope that courtesy and reason will find their due place once more; and that it will be possible again to experience a world where men will be glad to mingle with their fellows, and when man will do honour to his very state as man and seek, elsewhere than in the horror of war and strife, his true dignity and glory.

"In the state of moral confusion in which the world is placed to-day," said President Lebrun, "there are grave obligations which still rest upon our two nations, equally devoted to the cause of human progress. The maintenance of peace with respect for international law will not, however, indicate any hesitation, on our part, in the accomplishment of duty, when that must be done, nor any relaxation of our daily sacrifice and effort." These are earnest words and our two peoples must duly honour them. "In times past," replied the King not without a slight touch of humour, "the great men of our two countries have sometimes shown themselves slow in understanding the qualities of one another. . . Such is not, however, the situation to-day."

God grant that these qualities of wisdom and bravery, of respect for human dignity and faithfulness to duty and a sense of honour, may gather strength and impose that restraining strength upon all those passions which are born of cupidity and fear! "*Force tenace et sage*"—these are His Majesty's words.

France has received and listened to them in a spirit of quiet reflection. She owes a profound debt of gratitude to King George who has thus recalled to her the soul and mission that is hers, and her true heritage.

PAUL DONCEUR.

SOME KNOTTY POINTS FOR SPIRITUALISTS

II. IS THE ATTEMPT TO COMMUNICATE WORTH WHILE?

AS previously stated, I do not question that many people—especially those who are devoid of, or who feel that they are losing, faith in the Christian revelation—may derive something of comfort and hope from their contact with Spiritualism. For them, no doubt, it seems to be worth while, at any rate in the earlier stages of their devotion to the cause. But the same may also be said of Christian Science, Theosophy, the Group Movement, and a variety of other creeds and philosophies which attract recruits and have a certain vogue. The mere fact that a number of ardent disciples proclaim that they have been consoled, strengthened and uplifted by the teaching which they have adopted does not prove very much. Many a man has obtained relief from a remedy which had no virtue of its own but which owed its efficacy solely to the faith awakened in the patient, or possibly to the self-discipline entailed by a hitherto unwonted adherence to any kind of rule.

Again, the benefits which Spiritualism is alleged to confer are certainly problematical so far as regards the average recruit. By no means all who seriously study the subject are able to persuade themselves that it provides satisfactory proof even of survival. It may be true that a number of those who are foremost in attacking and denouncing it show plainly enough that they have never taken the trouble to acquaint themselves with the evidence. But, on the other hand, nothing can be more certain than that many open-minded and intelligent men have found little to repay them for the time they have devoted to a thorough investigation. The case of Horace Greeley is typical of thousands of others. No prominent man of the nineteenth century was more respected for his integrity and independence of judgment than this great publicist. During the early years of the Spiritualist movement his journal, *The Tribune*, was the only newspaper that gave an impartial hearing to both sides. He had intimate personal relations with the Fox sisters, and did his best to befriend them, while the recent loss of a daughter inspired

him with the hope of being brought by the aid of their mediumship into communication with the child so tenderly loved. But when in 1869 Greeley published his "Recollections," he made it unmistakably clear that the attempt to investigate Spiritualism had in his case not proved to be worth while. He was satisfied, indeed, in spite of the prevalence of fraud, that there was much which trickery could not explain. "The jugglery hypothesis," he wrote, "utterly fails to account for occurrences which I have personally witnessed, to say nothing of others." But a little further on he declares :

As a general rule, the so-called spiritual communications are vague, unreal, shadowy, trivial. They are not what we should expect our departed friends to say to us. I never could feel that the lost relative or friend who professed to be addressing me was actually present. . . I insist that the "spiritual" literature of the day, in so far as it purports to consist of communications or revelations of the future life, is more inane and trashy than it could be if the sages and heroes, the saints and poets, of bygone days were really speaking to us through these pretended revelations.

And again :

I do not know that these communications made through mediums proceed from those who are said to be their authors, or from the spirits of the departed at all. Certain developments strongly indicate that they do ; others that they do not. We know that they *say* they do, which is evidence so far as it goes, and so far as it is not directly contradicted or rebutted. That some of them are the result of juggle, collusion or trick, I am confident ; that others are *not*, I decidedly believe.

Very sensibly Greeley argues that the failures of the medium often bear valuable testimony to his good faith. If it were all jugglery, there need be no failures ; but he adds :

These failures served decidedly to disincline me to devote my time to what is called "investigation." To sit for two dreary mortal hours in a darkened room in a mixed company, waiting for someone's disembodied grandfather or aunt to tip a table or rap on a door, is dull music at best ; but to so sit *in vain* is disgusting.

As a parallel to the case of this distinguished American, let

me appeal to the testimony of the fourth Earl of Dunraven, who was also a man of letters,¹ and later an Under-Secretary of State. No one ever had better opportunities of studying Spiritualism than Lord Adare, as he was called in early life. For a year together he lived in almost daily intercourse with D. D. Home, the greatest of mediums. He witnessed and kept a minute record of Home's most astounding phenomena, and to the end of his days he maintained his belief in their supernormal character. But Dunraven, for all that, wrote in his book "*Past-Times and Pastimes*" (1922):

My own experiences took place more than fifty years ago and since then I have taken no active interest in the subject. I abandoned it for several reasons. Phenomena were all of the same character. I "got no forrader." I found that I made no progress, or at any rate not sufficient progress to warrant further investigation that was not very congenial to me, and for some reason or other was physically exhausting. I observed that some devotees were inclined to dangerous extremes, and became so possessed by the idea of spiritual guidance in the everyday affairs of life as to undermine their self-dependence and to weaken their will power.²

Lord Dunraven also declares that he could never satisfy himself as to the identity of the spirits which purported to communicate through Home when entranced. There were times when the medium seemed to reproduce perfectly the habits of thought, the tricks of speech and the very accents of people he had known. On other occasions, however, the impersonation was quite unconvincing and the communicators appeared ignorant of many things which it was inconceivable that they should have forgotten.

Clearly Lord Dunraven did not think it worth while to trouble himself further about communication with the spirits in the beyond. There are dozens of similar examples which one might quote, but I single out these two because Greeley and Dunraven had easy access, continued over a long period, to mediums of the very first order. The ordinary citizen has to content himself with the opportunities afforded by a local circle or by occasional attendance at some platform demonstration. Among an audience of a couple of thousand people

¹ His book "*The Great Divide*," published in 1876, was very cordially praised.

² Dunraven, "*Past-Times and Pastimes*," Vol. I, p. 11.

at the Queen's Hall what chance has the individual inquirer of obtaining a personal message, and of those who do claim to be convinced that some deceased relative has addressed them, how many possess any vestige of the critical faculty, or if they possessed it, would be anxious to prove themselves deluded? One has to make acquaintance with such books as D. D. Home's "Lights and Shadows of Spiritualism," or the candid protests of a very outspoken medium in the volume entitled "I, James Whittaker" (1934), to form an adequate idea of "the wish to believe" which prevails among the multitude. I have been indignantly denounced for saying that "the rank and file of the Spiritualist battalions are, for the most part, silly people, the majority of them ill-educated and absolutely devoid of the critical faculty." But what other conclusion can one possibly draw from Mr. James Whittaker's account of his experiences mainly among the operatives and mill girls of our crowded centres of population in the North? He says, for example:

It amazes and positively astonishes me to know . . . that so many people are gullible. The fact that most mediums are hollow frauds is discernible a mile away, but yet so piteous is the quality of human faith, people continue going to these meeting places. From what I have written above, it might appear that I am just another of the many fools who attack Spiritualism because they do not believe in it, or because they do not know anything about it. But I do believe in the truths of it, and I do know something about it, having had, over a period of almost ten years, a very close contact with all sides of it.¹

Or again:

I had, until I entered the Spiritualist Halls, a very real respect for women, individually and in the mass; but I lost most of it when I listened to the obvious tripe, piffle and rubbish that they not only swallowed willingly but asked for again and again. It was so vile, so obscene, so sickening to sit and listen to the idiotic dribblings of neurotics and semi-epileptics—for of such types are most mediums.

¹ "I, James Whittaker," with a foreword by Gilbert Frankau. London: Rich & Cowan. 1934. Pp. 201—202. The book is crude and rather flamboyant in style, but the fact that the novelist, Gilbert Frankau, has contributed a preface proves that it is not contemptible.

He adds :

No punishment is too severe for the blood-sucking parasites who batten on these grief-stricken women, and who turn their grief into a paying business. Nor will any punishment cover the sin committed by those who turn the greatest tragedy in human experience into a very sordid and commercialized institution.¹

The reviewer of this book in the most widely-circulated of Spiritualist journals, *Psychic News* (September 15, 1934), pledges his word for the good faith of the writer in the following terms :

Whittaker is a man who knows our case thoroughly. He has been a Spiritualist for ten years. For four years of that time he was practising as a medium, giving inspirational addresses and clairvoyance. . . What he has written must be accepted as coming from a man who knows what he is talking about.

Mr. Whittaker declares further : "Seven mediums out of every ten are fraudulent. . . Nine out of ten are half cracked ; there is hardly a medium I know practising who is wholly honest or wholly sane." Will anyone venture to say that the working classes, men and women, who have practically no choice but to have recourse to local mediums of this type, are really obtaining anything which is worth the money and time they spend upon it ?

For the vast majority of the less well-to-do population the only alternative left, if they wish to persuade themselves that they are maintaining contact with the world of disembodied spirits, is to have recourse to automatic writing. Whether they attempt to practise it themselves, or are content to read the messages printed by others, even so devoted a Spiritualist as the late Mrs. Philip de Crespigny, at that time Principal of the British College of Psychic Science, is not very encouraging. Of this automatism she writes :

It is the commonest form of mediumship and the easiest come by. With care and training it can be developed into a very perfect channel ; but to allow either brain or hand to be lightly used without care and training is to step in where angels fear to tread. The very fact that perfect passivity is a necessary essential to results should

¹ "I, James Whittaker," p. 208.

speak for itself. A door is opened through which anyone can walk, and as in the case of doors in this world, it is easy enough to allow a person to walk in, but may be a very different affair when it comes to persuading him to walk out.

And again :

To the uninitiated there is danger in playing with fire, with forces of which we understand but little, and I would recommend would-be automatic scribes in their own interests, to leave the practice to the past-masters of the art, *unless* they are prepared to devote both time and trouble to the requisite training. . . The whole subject has suffered . . . from the uninformed and irresponsible claimants to abnormal powers, whose "guides" profess to descend from the highest spheres for the purpose apparently of expressing themselves in pious platitudes, poetical effusions of the doggerel variety, or instruction in science of a nature to make the entire Royal Society turn in its grave.¹

Mrs. de Crespigny speaks of "danger," and this is emphatically an aspect of the subject which cannot be ignored. We have already seen that earnest and experienced Spiritualists insist, one after another, upon the predominant eagerness of the more unpleasant type of communicators to force their way in. "The bad and frivolous spirits," says Mr. T. Purchas, for example, "are even more actively keen than the good to get into communication with the earth."² Moreover, it is not only deception that is to be feared, but in some cases physical horrors, obsession, and direct promptings to evil, notably suicide. The very mysterious death of Judge Dahl and the suicide of his wife which lately for many months occupied the attention of the Norwegian Courts at Oslo, seems to be an instance in point. I have myself come across two or three cases in which a strong suggestion of self-destruction remained as the result of messages received through mediums or through automatic writing. Mr. Hereward Carrington, who has given much time to investigation and written many books on the subject, urges that no theory but that which

¹ See "This World and Beyond," by Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny. 1934.

² "Spiritual Adventures of a Business Man," p. 196; and see also *ibid.*, pp. 441-444 and pp. 218-219. 1929.

admits that some evil spiritual influence from outside is apt to intervene, can explain—

why the entity thus cultivated is so frequently evil and malicious, and why in the finest characters and in the purest young girls, it uses the vilest language and counsels the patient's own destruction. Many suicides have resulted in consequence of the instructions given by planchette. That I know.¹

Naturally, these things when they occur are not, and indeed cannot be, made public. There must be many cases which are never known to anyone but the victim himself, and he has now passed to another world. Some are disclosed to a narrow circle of friends, but these feel themselves bound to do their best to hush the matter up. The successes of Spiritualism, if we may so call them, are proclaimed from the house tops and advertised with full detail in every journal of the cult, but the failures and the darker episodes for the most part remain hidden. I am not blaming anyone for this, but it must be plain that before the enthusiast can safely pronounce that the practice of Spiritualism is worth while, he ought to be very sure that he is well informed regarding the amount of harm it does. What we are told on good authority is that "it is as dangerous for the unprepared experimenter rashly and in a light or frivolous temper to undertake personal investigation in this matter, as for one knowing nothing of chemistry to enter a laboratory and begin unguided experiments on nitro-glycerine and the fulminates."² On the other hand, it is freely admitted that most commonly very little preparation is made and very few precautions are taken by those who set out to explore the occult, and the result is that they often suffer in consequence. Mrs. Osborne Leonard tells us how at an impromptu sitting which she had rashly ventured upon with two girl friends, a hairy arm clutched at the throat of one of them, who then fled shrieking to the door. Mrs. Leonard, whose integrity is above suspicion, herself clearly saw the arm, as an imperfect blind did not completely exclude the entry of light from outside.³ Such an experience is shattering to mind and body; but even this is probably not in the long run so disastrous as the effects produced by hal-

¹ Carrington, "Problems of Psychic Research," p. 334.

² This is quoted in *Light*, June 1, 1934.

³ Mrs. Leonard, "My Life in Two Worlds," p. 35.

lucinatory voices which are believed in and listened for. Mr. Shaw Desmond is one of the many Spiritualists who encourage people to be "their own mediums," and he declares that "increasing numbers of intelligent men and women . . . speak with their dead as freely in death as in life."¹ He perhaps rightly prefers such work in home circles to what he calls the "masses of scrubby, doubtful mediumship of the back-parlour of the psychic teashop." But surely the dissemination of the idea that people with a little practice can talk to their dead friends is likely to have very disastrous consequences. It is just the silly and weak-minded who will be persuaded that there are voices speaking to them and who will pay little attention to Mr. Desmond's caution regarding the need of expert guidance.

There has, no doubt, been much exaggeration in the statements constantly made that the asylums of England and America are crowded with lunatics whom Spiritualism has driven out of their minds. But no one can read the grave and temperately-expressed warning of Dr. G. M. Robertson of the Morningside Asylum, Edinburgh, without realizing the danger of awakening the dormant proclivity to hallucination which exists in most of those who have inherited a latent tendency to nervous disorders. It is idle to reply that people are equally driven out of their minds by religion, by love, by business worries and other causes. No approved religion, least of all the Catholic Church, encourages its votaries to believe that they are likely to hear heavenly voices speaking to them; but Spiritualism does. If Catholic mysticism admits it as a bare possibility in saintly lives, it at the same time severely condemns the attitude of those who look for such communications as a normal means of guidance, however holy they may seem. Moreover, it insists that it is the first duty of anyone who believes himself to be so favoured, to submit the whole matter to an experienced director.

Dr. Robertson outlines the case of a neurotic mother who had lost her son, hearing of him first through mediums, "then getting into touch with him herself and receiving messages from him, some as impressions and others as audible words, then increasing her circle of spiritual acquaintances . . . till finally God conversed with her in a low musical voice at all times, and confided His plans for the future to her." In his

¹ "We do not Die," pp. 144-147. 1934.

temperate and sober protest, the specialist concludes by asking: "where in this case does Spiritualism end and mental disorder begin?"

Unfortunately, it happens that the mentally unbalanced are especially attracted by the phenomena of the occult. Sir William Barrett's attitude to the subject was altogether friendly, but he wrote:

It is the weakening of the sense of personal responsibility that constitutes the chief peril of Spiritualism. Hence your gates should be guarded with zealous care; even the level-headed should walk warily, and the excitable and emotional should have nothing to do with it; for the fascination of the subject is like a candle to the moth. It attracts and burns the silly, the credulous and the crazy.¹

And here I cannot refrain from quoting once again, as I have done on other occasions, the very weighty words of a well-known psychic, who has now for a number of years, practised automatism with remarkable success. In her book "Voices from the Void," Mrs. Travers Smith (Hester Dowden) writes:

If I may venture to advise persons who long to speak once more with those whom they have loved who have vanished in darkness, I should say it is wise and sane not to make the attempt. The chances against genuine communication are ten to one; the disappointments and doubts connected with the experiment are great. Personally I would not make any attempt to speak to the beloved dead through automatic writing or the ouija-board. The evidence they offer of their identity is too ephemeral and unsatisfactory; and, as I would not undertake these experiments for myself, I would not willingly help others to risk them. I fear these observations I have just made may be very distasteful to many who approach the subject from the Spiritualist point of view. I cannot offer these people any apology for my attitude.²

Again the same writer has declared elsewhere: "Psychic investigation is for the few, not for the masses. The unlettered public should be discouraged from pursuing this sub-

¹ "The Threshold of the Unseen," p. 260.

² "Voices from the Void," p. 138.

ject, more especially when excitement or emotion, religious or otherwise, is involved." It is, however, undoubtedly the contention of Spiritualists generally that communication with the spheres is meant for the masses. Do we not read in Sir Oliver Lodge's "Raymond" that "in ten years from now (1916) about fifty per cent of the civilized portion of the globe will be either Spiritualists or coming into it"? Did not Pheneas, the Arabian sage who lived before the time of Abraham, repeatedly assure Sir Arthur Conan Doyle that "soon, very soon" the world will be transformed, that "the floodgates will be opened to spiritual power"? "You have not long to wait," Pheneas added, "even from your point of view." And Sir Arthur himself was to do it all. The contents of that book "Pheneas Speaks," provide an admirable illustration of the kind of uplift Spiritualism offers to its votaries. Already, within twelve years, one is able to judge how illusory, how subjective, how coloured by the personal beliefs of both the medium and her husband, was the whole fabric of the communications made by the supposed spirit guide. The same is true of the widely-circulated books "Towards the Stars," and "The Wisdom of the Gods," of the late H. Dennis Bradley. Both Doyle and Bradley devoted endless time and energy to the cause. In the light of the revelations made in these books¹ one asks "were the results worth while?" To quote again from Mrs. Travers Smith, she tells us: "One asks oneself whether time is well spent, seeking for the few grains of gold one finds in the huge dust-heaps of disappointment and dulness"; and in another place she describes the average result of such investigation as "a Hades of disappointments and even absurdities."

HERBERT THURSTON.

¹ I have discussed the contents of these volumes in more detail in a little essay, "Modern Spiritualism" (Sheed & Ward).

EDITORIAL NOTE

All contributions submitted to the Editor must be typed and be accompanied by a sufficiently large stamped addressed envelope—stamps (or Post Office coupons from abroad) alone will not suffice. Articles so submitted should be concerned with matters of general interest, and be the fruit of expert knowledge or original research. They should not ordinarily exceed 3,500 words, and must be intended for exclusive publication in the "Month," if accepted. As a general rule, subjects dealing with the exposition of theology and ethics are reserved to the staff.

CATHOLIC SHOWMANSHIP

DURING our recent stay in Rome we observed that there was a marked tendency to try to exhibit to the eye what had hitherto been made known, as a rule, by print or preaching only. This seemed to us a very sound idea; though Communist, anti-Communist, Oriental, Liturgical, Missionary exhibitions became rather wearing. At the Budapest Eucharistic Congress, there was, however, an international "Charities" Exhibition so admirably organized—scientifically, artistically—that we proposed to visit it several times, even at the expense of the great ceremonies. But, alas! our energy expired, and we never went there again. Oddly enough, therefore, we find we can better picture the "Associated Catholic Charities Pageant" held at Sydney (April 20—24, 1938). This is our reason for writing first about Australia, and for saying a little about Budapest only in the second place. Finally, we would like to express some hopes about the whole topic of "Catholic Showmanship."

Seventy-nine years ago, Australia's first bishop, and Sydney's first archbishop, John Bede Polding, appealed for the founding of what is now St. John's College in the University of Sydney. He defined what was needed; and said: "And now, my friends, I shall be ashamed of the people if the sum of £10,000 be not paid in hard cash in less than three months. Let us come nearer to the point, and say—in less than three weeks" (loud applause). This Englishman understood the limitless generosity of the Australian. £12,000 was subscribed at the meeting itself: and within six months, when the country returns came in, £20,000 had been subscribed, so that the full Government subsidy was ensured; and St. John's College was built.

We twice visited this, and tried to describe its serene dignity in a long-ago book, "The Risen Sun." There is much of which modern Oxford ought to be architecturally ashamed: but there is nothing in St. John's to be ashamed of: there is something in modern Oxford which deserves special applause (Campion Hall); but so much originality coupled with solidity cannot be expected everywhere. It remains that since seventy-five years ago, nothing has been added to the accommodation in the simple and noble Uni-

versity College of St. John. In this year, however, a very fine tower over the entrance has been completed, in memory of Col. Francis Bede Freehill (1854—1908), for which thanks are due to his widow, Countess Freehill. This tower was officially "opened" at the end of the Pageant of which we speak in a moment. We are on the whole reminded by it of the sturdy Merton College, Oxford. And we are the more glad to reflect on this, because while the "consecrator" of the tower was the indomitable Archbishop of Sydney, the Hostess, president of St. John's College Ladies' committee, was Mrs. Walter Burfitt, whose husband, Dr. Burfitt, displayed unforgettable kindnesses to us when we lay, rather vague as to our future, in Lewisham hospital, Sydney. The first difficulty of the College was, I gather, due somewhat to Australian parents not seeing the point of it—if indeed they saw the point of a prolonged education for their children at all.

The Very Reverend Rector, Father J. C. Thompson, C.M., in his article "The Case for the Appeal" (*i.e.*, for the development of the College), made this clear, and also, the vast change in sentiment due to the Joint Pastoral of November, 1923. Into the reasons why Catholic University Students should have a complete Catholic university education we certainly need not enter here. But that Pastoral provided reasons which were almost embarrassingly attended to. Parents began to ask for more than could be given. Divisions of the Library became cubicles. "Quarters" had to be arranged in what should have been an infirmary. Men were begged to share rooms that should have been single. At the worst, applicants had to be refused. Parents of sons were, in fact, begging to be provided, for their boys, with part of what the Sisters of the Sacred Heart had—with great courage and against much opposition due to misunderstanding—already begun to provide for their daughters in the great Sancta Sophia College just opposite. St. John's, therefore, was urged to double, then to treble, its present accommodation. It (to my mind) most properly refused to run into debt and have the job of paying off an all-but interminable annual interest, though on my second visit to Australia I learned that Banks would refuse nothing to Catholic enterprises which had episcopal sanction, so certain were they that all obligations would be fulfilled. Still, few things irritate me more than the sight of the Catholic laity sweating themselves

to death to pay off annual barren "interests." The completion of the College was, therefore, insisted on as a "special and urgent diocesan work," and the maximum of the appeal was to be £50,000, to be obtained within five years. We like this! A *definite amount* is asked for: a *definite time-limit* is set! If we grant that such a demand is on a large scale, we also agree that Australians think and visualize on a large scale, which we are not inclined to do. Moreover, the "appeal" has this year been extended to all the parishes of the Archdiocese and has resulted in a sum of well over £3,000, showing that parishes too realize that *their* young men and women go to study outside parish boundaries; and next year, and the year after also, the appeal will be extended to the entire continent, presumably because Australia feels itself to be "one," and knows that Sydney has a future to some extent comparable with London, to which so very many students come who are not Londonians nor even English. The response already has been magnificent.

But this event was preceded by a three days' pageant of the most enchanting kind, since on its first day an Early Colonial Concert was produced and on the third day, an Early Colonists' Ball. I can but hope that the "staging" of these was as perfect as the Victorian pictures of the "Memento" indicate! If so, the triumph of Mr. John Gould (pageant-master) was indeed great. All those exquisite or charmingly absurd songs were "rendered"—"Alice, where art thou?"; "Where'er you walk"; "Who is Sylvia?"; "Drink to me only," "The two Grenadiers"; "My mother bids me bind my hair"; "My grandfather's clock"—followed by "The British Grenadiers," by the band of the King's Own Regiment, and God Save the *Queen*. So perfect was the reproduction to be, that ladies were asked not to clap, which was in colonial times, I presume, slightly "forward," but to flutter their handkerchiefs.

But the "clock" song was sung by Young Ladies from the Academies of the Sisters of Charity who commemorate this year the centenary of their arrival in Australia after four months' tossing at sea. It was again Bishop Polding who had obtained this great gift for the young colony by appealing to Mary Aikenhead. This heroic woman had not intended to create her Society to do work in "foreign missions," which indeed Australia must have seemed to be; yet she sent five Sisters in charge of Dr. Ullathorne, O.S.B., along with other

missionary priests. It is pleasant to know that when they landed a great crowd had assembled to greet them, and did indeed shout with welcome as the five nuns, who were still wearing the "quaint bonnets and crepe veils" proper to those penal days, stepped ashore. Not only did they open the first Convent in Australia—for long, it remained the only one—but since Mother Aikenhead had caused Sister M. de Sales O'Brien to be trained in the Paris Hôpital de la Pitié before she opened the first St. Vincent's hospital in Dublin, Australia can see in this Sister its first trained nurse.

The nuns began their work at Parramatta, assisting the women prisoners in the Penitentiary there, and also doing admirable work in the district. It would be a pity to linger over ancient quarrels and injustices, which made these first years difficult—almost to the point of extinguishing the good work of these nuns in New South Wales; but in 1857, St. Vincent's hospital was opened, and still, along with many other fine enterprises due to these Sisters, continues; I must not be thought ungrateful to the Blue Nuns at Lewisham (Sydney) or to the Mercy Nuns at Melbourne, if I confess to a minute regret that I never spent at any rate *part* of my Australian hospital-sojourns in one of the St. Vincent's hospitals in those great cities.

As for the Early Colonists' Ball—well, balls do not lend themselves very easily to description: but the old-time dances were revived: we may hope that a good percentage of the guests (received by Miss K. Egan, president of the Catholic Women's Association) attended in "early colonial" costume.

Between these events, however, came the Concert arranged by the "Grail" (with the co-operation of the Theresian Club and the Champion Society), and carried out by 250 performers. It began with the now so well-known Grail-Song: "This is the Age of Youth," and continued with Latin hymns (Palestrina's music and others); delicious French "bergerettes," English folk-songs, Austrian and German songs (including Schubert's exquisite "Maria durch einen Dornwald ging"), and Dutch songs, for our introduction to which we have wholly the Grail to thank. The second part (the audience got good value for its money!) consisted of more songs and some folk-dancing, and ended with the Grail "Pioneer Song," by one of its members.

Our point here is, that this Australian Pageant was sheer

good *showmanship* (as well as, we trust, remunerative for the "associated charities"): it contained, first, an *idea* set forth *colourfully*; it emphasized Australian *history* (and not mere contemporary localism) and (once more) made us realize the absolute miracle of Australia itself, and of Catholic Australia in particular; and in its homage to sheer beauty it expressed that desire to use all God's good things in His service, which the Grail has done so much to re-awaken, not least in England.

Our Catholics have used colour in their outdoor processions, though we confess to a fear that these sometimes turn almost into pantomimes, in which delighted mammas spend their time detecting their own offspring among various kinds of angels, pages, flower-girls and what not: nor can you dance while "processing." But the Grail has shown us how to introduce colour, rhythmic movement, and music *and* religion on occasions when we are not meant to be actively praying: and has shown us how much we can do besides holding bazaars, whist-drives and fêtes, which practically sum up our melancholy methods of "raising funds."

It has, moreover, re-introduced us alike to *ideas* and to *history*. Had I not visited (four times, but all too briefly) Ceylon, I should have learnt more about that island in an hour, when the Grail transformed Westminster Cathedral Hall almost into Ceylon itself, than ever else I should; and the Grail invented a picture of our Lady of Ceylon which has delighted Ceylonese Catholics themselves (I ventured to reproduce it among sermons on our Lady, especially as (I was assured) our Lady is purely Cingalese in type, and her Child, Tamil). As for bazaars, I think everyone detests them, and many even disapprove of them. None the less, people say: "What else can we do?" It has often seemed to me that really into bazaars themselves some *idea* could be introduced which would rivet attention, awake the intelligence, and vastly increase desire to co-operate. Let me finish, then, with a few lines about the Charities exhibition at Budapest—rather in contrast, I fear, not indeed with the Australian "associated charities" pageant, but with our own United Charities bazaar held annually in London—heroic as has been the labour spent upon it.

A palace housed it. In the vestibule, you were at once confronted by two huge paintings representing the *causes* (an *idea* already!) of the Misery of the Masses—wars, epi-

demics, origins of "popular" maladies, egoism in great cities: and causes of personal misery: hereditary sickness; self-induced sicknesses; luxury; alcoholism; ignorance; irreligion. Another vast canvas showed the Army of Charity—a kind of historical bird's-eye view of Christian Charity throughout the ages. All such pictures were accompanied by cardinal texts from the Scriptures—from St. John, or St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians (ch. xiii). Forthwith began enough—never too much; nothing like the disorderly huddle of similar stalls that make our bazaars so ugly—to display the march of Christian Charity from earliest times. There was a superb series of "texts" (from the Fathers, or quite different persons, like Julian the Apostate, *ordering* the imitation of Christian charitable methods all of which, naturally, were free—"it is to our disgrace that we should see not only no Jew having to beg, but the Galileans taking care not only of their 'poor,' but also of ours"—leaving no doubt about what Christians—up to about 1000 A.D.—thought of the duty of Charity). Some mottoes were more than semi-Scriptural—"He who will not work, has no right to eat": others, more challenging: "The right to possess comes from God: Man has only the right to Use what he possesses." Next came the exhibition of such ideals realized in history—what the Benedictines did for civilization (light-houses; grape-growing; stained-glass work; silk-weaving; milk-industry; draining; the northward extension of agriculture even into Russia, where were acclimatized the apple, the pear, cherries, beans, lentils, pepper, beetroots, cabbages, thanks to them): what the Cistercians did on the same plane: always accentuating the point that these Communities did not live *off* their employees, but *for* them. Naturally, emphasis was laid on what Hungarian monasteries in Hungary achieved ever since St. Stephen (roughly 1000 A.D.): but the Exhibition being "international," nothing of that kind could be omitted, and everything modern which was in direct heredity from these was pictured (in minute but very effective space) by "diapositives"—i.e., transparently illuminated stereographs. The Hungarians have their right to be humbly proud. Such was St. Stephen's character, and such the true sense of "Christendom," which Pope Silvester II (French in origin) accentuated when he, from Italy, gave to Stephen of Hungary the crown prepared for the king of Poland, by way of a German Abbot. Details were then entered into—e.g., the

care of lepers in which the Hungarians played a leading part. Innumerable "orders" of laymen were instituted to see to the hygienic state of ports, the upkeep of hospitals for the infectious, public clinics, a severe examination of the diplomas of doctors, chemists and midwives, etc.—Dr. Walsh has (or should have) made us familiar with how much was done in the Middle Ages for the sick, with how much was known, *e.g.*, the true origin of venereal disease; the suture of divided nerves, and how much was later on forgotten, *i.e.*, disdained by the Renaissance as "obscurantist," as "medieval"—*e.g.*, the use of red in the treatment of smallpox: fact and method were then known, if not the reason. The Nobel prize had to be given, in 1880, to Dr. Finsen, who discovered, in theory, what had been known and used by men of nearly 1,000 years before him, *i.e.*, the use of Red Rays in smallpox cases; and the results that he scheduled were exactly those that had been catalogued in these remote days. Here is the vow of the man who willed to enter the Order of the Holy Spirit (I have no space to insist upon the model-for-Europe hospital of the Holy Spirit in Rome, due to Innocent III, next door to which I recently lived for two months):

I consecrate and vow my life to God, and to the Virgin Mary, and to the Holy Spirit, and to our Lords, the Sick, whom I will to serve all the days of my life. I vow myself to chastity and with the help of God I will observe this, without possessing any personal capital.

He then was told:

The House of the Holy Spirit promises to you for ever bread and water, and poor clothes. Our Brothers cannot ask more, for our true Lords are the Poor. We shall always regard ourselves as their servants. They go naked and destitute, and it would be shame for us were we to show ourselves arrogant to them.

The next series of Halls displayed Christian Charity in its more modern setting, *i.e.*, as from St. Charles Borromeo and St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. Here, of course, the subject becomes too complicated for us to describe it fully: the Jesuit Reductions in Paraguay naturally occupy their special space: also, the Augustinian or Franciscan enterprises in the Philippines, and so forth. But the subject picks itself historically up, so to say, as from St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and carries itself undeviatingly for-

ward up to the most saintly Bishop Prohászka, quite recently dead—in the more restrictedly Hungarian department of this truly "Catholic" survey; and to the Encyclicals of Leo XIII and the reigning Pontiff, exhibited by means of an illuminated reproduction—at least in their salient paragraphs. In the most vivid way it is shown how in Hungary at any rate, Church and State still serenely co-operate in carrying out what neither could do for itself—whether financially, or as regards personnel, or, *as such*, in the case of the State, spiritually (I may say that hardly was I in Budapest than I had to assist a dying Canadian; even such priests as could talk English were, in such circumstances, unfindable: but the one thing the man wanted was a *priest*, and one to whom he could go to confession easily. R.I.P.). What specially impressed me was the placarding of a most accurate account of "Charity finance" with every amount, source, destination, debt, excess, accurately indicated. The utmost frankness of statement: the utmost clarity of "articulation": the manifest certainty that the "charitable" Faithful wanted to know what they were asked to help to do; and the just recognition that they ought (i) to co-operate, and (ii) to see tabulated the exact results of their co-operation. There were similar charts concerned with those national groups in any way connected with Hungary—Czech; German; Polish; Irish; French; and, finally, English, especially so far as the Apostleship of the Sea was involved—which it still is, though Hungary possesses at present neither seaboard nor navy.

To conclude. This Exhibition implied the existence of a most intelligent and educated population, demanding to know what we, alas I do not offer to ours, though (I think) we should fare much better if we provided it. Our own Catholic population needs to be stirred—this it can be, especially through the eye, and, if what it sees, be firmly explained vocally. It *can* be shown all that—we have the material; the late Father E. King, S.J., was rapidly improving our "missionary" exhibitions: the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary (I do not exclude other Congregations; but one simply can't catalogue them all in order of efficiency) are good collaborators: but if the material be "lumped together" almost haphazard, no one can make head or tail of it—an *olla podrida* of Japan, S. Africa, India, China and Australian Bushmen, or Maoris. And when this sort of amalgam is itself mixed up with "poor churches" up and down this island, nuns who make exquisite

under-linen, priests needing presbyteries, debts on schools and what not—how can we ever *expect* that the immense labour spent upon such bazaars can be properly compensated. Everyone knows that it is not. Everyone deplures it. But who could be astonished at it? What is needed is *one* organizing mind, properly seeing that division and sub-division are necessary : organization, and co-ordination : in short, an imaginative mind, *showing* the facts to visitors pictorially, and causing the “images” to be explained (probably two or three times in the course of even one bazaar or fête) : and a very intelligent mind, able always to explain the What, the Why, the How Much, and the Suitable Time-Limit.

But we don't want only bazaars. Our London parishes have not, most of them, existed much longer than the older Australian ones. May the Grail, perhaps, provide us with a pageant of Catholic London in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century ! So many churches, all too little known at present, and doing their work in districts that have become desperately poor, have a fascinating history, and might, owing to such a pageant, become once more widely known, visited and helped from outside the parish. How romantic is the history of many of them ! One instance—how many are aware that a poor servant-girl, much maltreated by her mistress, went long ago to the church of St. Aloysius in Clarendon Square, cried her heart out before the Altar, and suddenly saw the carved Eye above it . . . this emblem was transfigured for her and transfigured *her* : the down-trodden little creature became foundress of the Dominican nuns at Stone. What an “episode” !

And we would like to see not only “travelling” missionary exhibitions, into which not everything should be crammed, even at the expense of grieving some missionary congregations whose work might not be signalized (but by means of those “diapositives” an immense amount can be got into a small space), but, in each larger city, a permanent exhibition, with *good* “theatrical” side-shows, that might be scientifically illuminated, representing this mission or that. I firmly believe that an entrance fee of 3d. and a 1d. fee for lighting these side-shows, would easily pay the rates of the building which housed the Exhibition.

C. C. MARTINDALE

LOVE, SONG AND FAITH

("J'AIME, JE CHANTE, JE CROIS")

"THEODORE BOTREL. *Fête des Fleurs d'Ajonc. Pont-Aven.*" So proclaimed huge posters at every wayside station as the toy train wheezed asthmatically uphill or rushed alarmingly brakeless down into the valleys.

I opened the guide-book. Hurrying along the south coast of Brittany from Quimperlé to Quimper it devoted only a couple of bald lines to Pont-Aven, our destination. "Colony of artists. Regional fête in the Bois d'Amour." Still, Wood of Love had a romantic ring and the Hotel Julia was starred.

As the aged car from Rosporden swung over the old bridge across the Aven the weekly market was in full swing. Stalls were draped with mats of imitation leopard skin, piled with aprons and stuffs of vivid yellow, scarlet, blue and magenta. The white coifs of the women flapped around them like butterflies. Closed shutters revealed the castellated pattern of white stone round doors and windows, which is a characteristic feature of the town. One, taller than the rest, was gabled like a Flemish house and had a deep balcony bright with red roses and geraniums. Under its deep eaves an old stone Madonna gazed down with sublime detachment at the leering, diabolical gargoyle beneath her feet and the laughing, chattering, shifting crowd far below. Under a sky of dazzling blue the sunshine painted in even cruder colours the hot reds and yellows of hand-made pottery, the pyramids of tomatoes, peaches, oranges, green grapes and little scarlet apples.

The evening Angelus sounded in a clangour of bells from the old church perched on the hill across the river. The market-place was deserted now but along the low parapet of the bridge the men were sitting in a row, like migratory swallows on a telegraph wire. Scarlet trousers and blouses, blue or tan trousers with shirts of blue, yellow, green or pink, bare heads bleached almost white with the sun or black hair and tanned faces dark as Spaniards, black berets or, on the older heads wide-brimmed, buckled felts, made colour and

variety. The light, eager sound of French, spoken by some of the younger men, floated on a torrent of guttural, deep-vowelled Breton and reminded one of the Italian proverb that French is the language of birds, Italian of men and Spanish of angels.

Beyond the long line of mills, now silent for the coming night, lay the "Place Botrel" where a shrouded figure waited to be unveiled at the Fête on Sunday.

I confessed to a smart elderly lady beside me on the balcony that I had never heard of Botrel.

"Ne soyez pas honteuse, Madame," she smiled, "ni moi non plus."

Then, hearing that this was my first visit to Brittany she began to describe it with the sublime contempt of the Parisian for all that is not Paris. "Un pays triste, un peuple sauvage." The words brought to life all one's dreams of the wild, desolate coast at the world's end, where the Atlantic thunders ceaselessly on the rocks and man has left no trace of his passage since he erected those stupendous dolmens and menhirs to his bloodthirsty gods.

Magic and miracles, one had expected them in Brittany, yet this place had a quality all its own. In sleep, as in fairy tales, time and space cease to bind and matter becomes fluid. There are certain places which seem to share this quality. One comes to them a stranger and finds home. After a few days, or even hours, one is so steeped in their atmosphere, their memories and tradition, that it is difficult to realize that one's whole life has not been spent there. Certainly Pont-Aven has this timeless, visionary character and perhaps this, as much as its outward beauty, attracted the colony of artists which, at the end of last century, became as famous as the Fontainebleau school. There is, indeed, a picture in every street corner, in the long row of mills where the golden water of the Aven turns the old wooden wheels, in the silent, winding paths of the Bois d'Amour, in the ordered splendour of the stately chestnut avenues leading to the deserted little chapel of Tremalo.

The walls of the Hotel Julia are covered with local paintings by artists from France, England, Belgium, Holland and the United States who came here for a visit and remained here for the rest of their lives. The dining-room of the hotel—except that it is now panelled with their pictures—is unchanged since the days when the group round the wood fire

would call Mademoiselle Julia from the kitchen to tell newcomers the tale of her early days.

It is a fairy story in the true tradition, with the necessary salting of humour. Her old parents, whose grim faces look down from the walls, sent her while still a small child, to a situation in Concarneau. Halfway there, along the muddy track which was then the only road she subsided in tears under the hedge, where she was found, almost senseless, by a passer-by. The good Samaritan of Brittany took her to his home nearby, whence she would fain have returned to Pont-Aven. But Concarneau had to be faced after all, and when she grew up, her master's son would have married her had not the jealous sisters of the fairy story driven her out. Back in Pont-Aven she became the right hand of Madame Feutre who owned the hotel, and after Madame's suicide borrowed money from a friend to buy the house. So far, so good, but the purchase left her not a centime to buy food or drink! Her artist "family" used to club together every morning and, with some difficulty, supplied a few francs for the day's marketing, which she repaid as soon as she could. The friendly atmosphere thus created, has remained the tradition of the Hotel Julia. She not only looked after the health, food and clothes of her artists but often lent them money to exhibit their pictures in Paris, cancelled the debts of those genuinely unable to pay her and buried in her family vault such as died in exile. Gauguin was one of her faithful friends though not a client. In the winter of 1903 she placed the big salon of the hotel at the disposal of Theodore Botrel for him to give a concert and recital of his poems. He came for that one evening, but the "City of Mills" so laid her spell upon him that he came back next year to organize the first "Gorse Flower Fête" and finally to make his home in the low house looking seaward down the river and so sheltered by the Calvary-crowned hill that semi-tropical flowers thrive in its garden.

He was forty-four when war broke out in 1914, and heart trouble made him incapable of joining his old regiment as he tried to do, but he spent the next four years in trenches and hospitals, carrying his burning patriotism and the charming tenderness of his verse into the hell of Flanders, to the fever-stricken marshes beyond Salonika and the sun-baked snows of the Italian front. His motto, "J'aime, je chante, je crois," might be that of his beloved Brittany. Such poems as "Les Chansons de notre Pays," "Des Clochers à Jour,"

"Les Alouettes," "Fleurs d'Ajonc," brought to the homesick hearts of Breton soldiers and sailors the joyous clamour of church bells at dawn, the silver song of larks dropping from the high, pale sky and the nut-sweetness of gorse as it throws its golden cloak over naked grey rocks.

Sunday and the Fête de Botrel at last, a name by now that of a familiar friend. The little triangular Place which slopes from the Hotel Julia to the bridge was a microcosm of Brittany. The *Reine des Fleurs* passed with her maids-of-honour, their silk aprons and wide skirts stiff with embroideries of silver lace and sequins. The snowy, quilled collar rising winglike above the tight, glittering bodice, framed her face. Her dark hair was crowned with the Pont-Aven coif, prettiest of all in Brittany, with its rosy ribbons shining through the butterfly wings of cobweb-fine lace. Well might Botrel write of the Pont-Aven girls:

Leur coiffe de Dimanche,
Leur collerette à jour,
Semblent les ailes blanches
Du petit dieu d'Amour!

Over the bridge, six abreast, marched the troop of young men from Pontivy, nicknamed "White Sheep" from their coats of stiff, white wool, garnished with cuffs and collars of black velvet and a formidable array of silver buttons. Gleaming silver buckles clasped the long ribbon streamers on their black hats—altogether a striking costume. After them came women and children from the Ile de Sein, a tiny island off the Point du Raz, where westerly gales fling angry seas against the rocks both summer and winter. This little group were all in unrelieved black, even to coifs and aprons, for to them life is one long mourning for husbands, sons and lovers.

Fair girls with masses of lovely hair down to their waists were from l'Orient, built by Louis XIV on the south coast of Morbihan, between Quimperlé and Vannes, to serve as the port for the newly-founded French East India Company. The Bigauden women, from the extreme south-west corner of Brittany, are quite the opposite, screwing their hair tightly under witchlike conical caps, but splashes of yellow and orange gladden the men's waistcoats and the women's dresses.

The hoots of despairing motorists vainly trying to move through the packed streets were soon drowned by the lusty singing of the White Sheep, who achieved the impossible

and cleared a way for the depressing procession of frock-coated celebrities that had gathered from all over France and Belgium to honour Botrel. The bishop's purple was the only patch of colour as they climbed the hill up to the flowery cemetery where Botrel and Julia lie in the shade of tall cypresses and the taller Calvary.

Later in the day the "Queen of Flowers" was enthroned, like a garlanded idol, on a dais in the Place while, far below her, men, women and children whirled and twisted in strange primitive dances. "It is good when men dance in the streets," said a French poet, but the intricacies of the *jabados*, the crying of the *binious* call to mind not the word "good" but something older than our civilization, the fundamental fear and cruelty of man, his bitter realization of the joy of life and its swift passing, such as one sees in the Basque *dantza tchikiak* and hears in the wailing of Highland pipes and those of the Zampognari from wild Calabrian mountains.

A sudden outburst of song from the White Sheep and sailors home on leave was succeeded by a hauntingly familiar air—that of Moore's "Believe me if all those endearing young charms!" The *binouist* might have learnt it from some Irish exile, but one would rather believe it to be a primeval air which has lingered eternally by the western seas beneath which lies the mystic city of Ker-Ys.

Down came the rain. The dancers broke and were swallowed up by the crowds, white coifs hidden under mushroom umbrellas of striped blue and brown. Next to me on the balcony was a charming girl from l'Orient, her lovely face framed in waves of golden hair, and soon her mother was initiating me into the aspirations of Breton autonomists. Hot-headed young separatists, not content with the publication of a paper *Breiz de Zont* (Brittany of the Future) had blown up the bronze group at Rennes commemorating the union of Brittany with France by the marriage of Anne of Brittany with Charles VIII in 1491. "Les Bretons ont dans l'âme une cité dolente," says le Braz in his "Chanson de la Bretagne," showing the intense individualism and local patriotism which four and a half centuries of incorporation with France have not destroyed.

One is struck by these qualities in every Breton church, which disproves Renan's ridiculous assertion in "Souvenirs d'Enfance" that the seventeenth-century Jesuit missionaries had done their best to stamp out the cult of local saints. True,

St. Joan of Arc, St. Teresa of Lisieux and the Curé d'Ars are to be found but they are hopelessly outnumbered by Bretons. Of course, St. Anne, greatest of all, has been annexed as Breton by the legend that, an Armorican queen, she was forced to flee the country by her husband's cruelty and found sanctuary in Palestine. None of the others whose cult flourishes has been formally canonized except St. Pinchon and the more popular St. Yves, of whom the old rhyme says: "N'en eus en Breiz . . . eur zant evel zant Erwan" (there is no saint in Brittany like St. Yves). One of the most typical of the legends clustering round him is that which tells how he slipped into heaven one day when St. Peter was off duty. On his return the keeper of the keys told Yves to clear out at once as lawyers were not admitted to heaven. The intruder, however, was more than a match for the heavenly porter and lodged the objection that eviction was illegal unless performed by a sheriff's officer. Not one was to be found in heaven and so the lawyer-saint won his case!

The homely, familiar humour of such legends is aptly expressed in the tiny church of Tremalo, which lies beyond the Bois d'Amour of Pont-Aven. One comes from winding paths into a mile-long avenue of magnificent chestnuts, and at the end stands this gem of thirteenth-century architecture, its interior dim and deserted, its stones green with damp. Swallows have built their nests high in the roof, among golden stars and faded blue. The life-sized wooden Christ has the weary, rough-hewn face of a Breton peasant and recalls the legend that His scarred, bleeding feet trod for so many leagues over the wild moors and pathless forests of Armorica, His only companions a band of wolves, and finding neither castle nor hovel to shelter Him, He was fain to cry again that He "had not where to lay His head." On one altar stands St. Anne, with our Lady in her arms, on the other a rude figure with a strangely familiar name, St. Leger! In odd contrast to the severity of the arches without capitals and the naïve, archaic saint is the high altar, where the tabernacle is wreathed with a perfect riot of carved green vines and gold grapes among twisted pillars. The most original and typical feature of the chapel, though, is the frieze of grotesque heads at the foot of the rafters. No two are alike. There are dogs, dragons, rabbits, cocks, frogs and comic humans, two like some modern humorist, complete with bowler hats and thick eyebrows, a man with fingers in his

mouth blowing an apache whistle, an acrobat standing on his head, wood creatures with leaves sprouting from their mouths.

Here, surrounded by the visible expression of rough humour and childlike familiarity combined with deep religious devotion, one catches something of the spirit of those marvellous Jesuits who re-evangelized Brittany three hundred years ago—the Venerable Michel de Nobletz, troubadour of our Lady, whose motto might well have been the same as Botrel's; Julien Maunoir, his disciple, successor and biographer; little, lame Jean Rigouleuc whose miserable Rosinante has passed into a proverb; Vincent Huby, founder of the first house for retreats in Brittany—a thousand more, remembered and forgotten, but all far too little known in England.

The deepening dusk is alive with their presence, for this merging of past and present is part of the Breton magic. Outside the little chapel the shadow of the rude Calvary lengthens as the full moon swings clear of the trees. The chestnut avenue is full of the low talk and laughter of young lovers. A man is singing a fragment of some old ballad as he trudges home from work. The coif of an aged woman shows like a white moth as she passes telling her beads, and above the murmur of far-off Pont-Aven sounds the Angelus.

"J'aime, je chante, je crois."

M. YEO.

Human Wishes

Ash Wednesday, 1938.

A CROWN of flowers!—nay, but a cross of ashes!
 Health and long life!—"Remember thou art dust"—
 With friendship's wish God's solemn warning clashes;
 Love's "would that!" with the inexorable "Must."
 Yet song, not discord, thro' the spirit flashes
 That knoweth Death its birthday with the Just.

E.O.M.

NATURE NOTES

IV

SEA-FARING

TWELVE hours out from Kristiansand, I think it was, and somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Terschelling Light-vessel, we had our first visitor. We were pushing through a calm sea, the smoke of our one rakish funnel spewing cinders and soot over everyone standing abaft of it. At the time I was watching the last fiery gold and chrome plunge of the sun, watching for that mysterious "green ray," when I was called up to identify the wanderer.

Huddling against the base of the stack and mustering up what pugnacity he could—this was little, for he looked too tired to frighten even the galley mouse—perched a hawk. And to my surprise and delight the feeble glasses that I borrowed confirmed my first impression that he was an immature goshawk.

Under our inquisitive gaze the hawk grew restless and after visiting the galley-roof and the main hatch, he wheeled about the ship in dashing, tilting flight and eventually found comparative seclusion in the region of the poop.

I expatiated enthusiastically on the wonders of migration (though this, of course, was a case of wandering), but in competition with the captain, who could reel off the "Revenge" from Flores to foundering, my case was hopeless, and I was left to talk to myself.

Having been cheated of that green ray, I did not intend to miss our visitor. I watched him until my eyes ached with peering into the dusk, and the ship was silent but for the dull toll of the look-out's bell and the answering call from the bridge.

Next morning the wanderer was gone. To England, perhaps. I hoped his lot there would be happier than that of most rare birds who reach our shores.

He was not our only visitor, and perhaps it was as well for the peace of mind of these birdlings that he went before they came. Next came a missel-thrush who spent most of his time flying up and down from stern to stem. Then appeared a very ruffled whitethroat. What he was doing on that route was difficult to imagine. By his condition—he seemed cap-

able of little more than resting on a bulwark and looking very sorry for himself—he had been obviously blown from his path; yet tired though he was, he soon disappeared, low over the crested everlasting sea.

Presently two spotted flycatchers (not too tired to chase each other indignantly) joined us and they remained on board all day, for in the afternoon we were suddenly and mysteriously visited by a swarm of mosquito-like flies who provided a sumptuous and easily obtained meal for the 'catchers. Indeed, I think most of their aerial ballets must have been specially for our benefit, as the flies were remarkably torpid and needed but little catching.

Towards evening a dainty and very demure pied flycatcher rested on the bridge, but even the plenitude of food did not counteract the undesirability of our company, for he was soon gone towards green England. Probably he found the twelve knots (and twelve only in the imagination of the C.E.) of the cargo-boat too slow for his eager wings.

Then finally, when we were in sight of the coquetting wink of the Outer Gabbarde, a very spruce wheatear appeared, silently and avidly snicking up flies far into the dusk. In a few hours he would be chacking about some warm tormentil-studded down.

To me, at any rate, it was thrilling that these small voyagers should rest awhile with us; and I thought it would be very salutary for my rather smug fellow-passengers to ponder on the wonders of bird-migration, for it is a thing to make one marvel almost as much as the infinite stars.

Roughly, we knew where these migrants had come from. But why? Why had they gone back there last autumn? Why were they coming back to us now? How did those tiny fragile wings possess the power to travel so many thousand miles? How did the little weary bodies find the way over the trackless seas and the sky? And what was the origin of migration? Was it a seasonal pursuit of the sun? That seems a suspiciously simple explanation; yet the sun sustains all life and starts a whole cycle of relativity. But the subject is too vast to be more than touched upon here.

Yet the vastness of it does not occur to us when we see the migrants returning: when the martins twitter once again round the barton-roof or when we listen to the plaintive call, a loop of sound, *pee-oo*, of the tiny wood-wren, that yellow fairybird of the trees, what are our thoughts? Are we grate-

ful or at least glad that something æsthetically pleasing has returned? Yes, but our thoughts end there. We are so used to this return that we take it for granted. We never stop to consider whence the birds came nor how they knew their way back to their summer home.

And yet how many countless thousand miles do these frail wings travel? Swallow and screaming swift, happy martin and ecstatic nightingale, purring nightjar and skulking white-throat, all—and of the legions that come these are not a tithe—return from Africa. And what of those others less familiar, little stint and knot and the like, who “have slipped off in an Arctic night” to span the globe? Year after countless year these adventurers have winged their unheralded way, and the mystery of it all is as great as in the days when Man himself was still a roamer.

There must have been a time when migration was a deliberate and “aware” movement brought about by immediate necessity, as the motive is usually advantage. To take an obvious example: the Arctic bird that quits what in a few weeks would be a barren land for one of more congenial character is obtaining a very necessary advantage. But, on the other hand, there are examples in which the motive of gain is not clear. The slender-winged swift leaves us at a time when insect life teems to its zenith; and why, if the cuckoo can thrive in our woods during May and June, cannot he do so equally well in July and August?

The “restless wandering” of some birds is often explained by the coming of others. The seeking of advantage by seasonal migration causes waves of movement on the part of other birds not too hard placed to eke out an existence. When winter and hunger approach the northern lands, birds leave them and crowd down upon regions where food may be plentiful enough for those already there, but insufficient for the added numbers; and so the southern birds are forced to depart in search of easier hunting-grounds. And in spring the pendulum swings back.

But whatever the origin and whatever the cause, and whether migration is still a conscious act or become a habit the birds do not understand, how is it they find their way? It is not by sight; it cannot be wholly memory, for how do the young birds find the route, some long after their parents have forsaken them? We run up against the dead-end of Instinct. It is a lazy and inconclusive explanation of a subject which,

though it appear trivial to the uninterested, is of great economic importance to mankind. I repeat only what has been said so many times. Twice each year the vast host of birds flights across the earth. They are an immense force affecting Man's welfare far beyond the realization of most of us. They influence the insect population, causing increase or decrease, spreading or checking "noxious weeds," thus regulating Man's crops and therefore his life. They are a part of Nature's scheme, and because of this, migration is more than of mere academic interest to a few apparently egotistical men of learning.

Boastful Man may fondly imagine he has raised himself well above the general ruck of Nature, but he is still firmly attached to the cogs of a machine whose working is far more intricate and wonderful than any that he himself ever put hand to.

s.s. Gourkko.

V

THE HOMELESS HARE

In the dawn, with the larchwood silhouetted against the pallid sky and the last star flickering out, many hares were moving across the young wheat. The cadaverous light made them seem more like ghosts of animals in the dark field of some after-world, instead of living substances, as they crippled onward. Their movement bemused the eye: it was aware of something moving dimly, yet it could not fix them definitely; they were like unformed thoughts vaguely flitting across the mind. Slowly the eastern flush broadened and the light betrayed the hares on the dark, flint-strewn soil. At first you saw only those which happened to be on the move, but then you began to distinguish others and were amazed by the numbers: where had they all come from? There were scores, hundreds, scattered about the ground, crouching, nibbling, creeping, lolloping up the slope. Cobbett's "acre" of hares sprang to mind and no longer seemed an exaggeration.

Now they were taking alarm: a shepherd and his bobtail were skirting the field. The hares cantered away easily, wave after tawny wave, then more urgently as the man sent his dog flouncing after them. Their long, powerfully-muscled hind legs made for easier progress uphill than down. Away they went, graceful and timid, some over the knoll,—large for a moment on the skyline, then down out of sight. Some-

how, hares always seem windblown and lonely, even now in such numbers : they are for ever on the move, homeless, with no burrow to take refuge in ; creeping and crouching along the furrow or through the stubble, you feel a sympathy for them akin to that which you feel for deer ; perhaps it is their eyes or the perpetual state of wandering, or yet again, the persecution we associate with both animals.

But the hare is not always the timid figure of our pity : the winds of March imbue him with a ferocity which is as real as in any other creatures whose spirits spring torments : while I stood at the top of the ploughland against the wood, two hares cantered along the verge and halted abruptly, as if by common consent, to face each other. They remained thus for several moments, each no doubt sizing up his rival, then one of them made at the other, leapt over him and let loose a double kick with his hind legs that caught him a buffet in the ribs. This they considered with the deliberation of chess players ; then the second hare leapt in his turn and bucked with equal savagery. He landed close to the other, and sitting up, they boxed limply, dabbing muzzles but doing no damage. The serious part of the encounter was when they resumed bucking, for those long hind limbs are tough with muscle, as anyone who has handled a hare knows.

It was a mad, ludicrous display that worked up to a crescendo of ecstasy, it might almost be called, but for the fact that under the apparently lunatic demeanour there was something ferocious, for they put all the strength of their tawny bodies into each kick. You felt they really wanted to hurt each other, and this one of them evidently did, for after they had skedaddled and pranced and leapt, one of them cried enough and limped towards the hedge. However, the other had tasted victory and cantered ahead, whereupon the quitter, desperate, vaulted over him and dealt him a blow on the head that made him huddle as if stunned, which quite likely he was.

Presently he bestirred himself and began to wash. He detested the wet grass : he constantly lifted his paws and shook them impatiently as a cat does ; and in his clean thoroughness he was like a cat, too.

I walked out along the verge of the wheat and looked straight ahead. He crouched down, becoming part of the rusty undergrowth, but my eyes flickered and away he darted into the wood. By your eyes the hare can tell whether you have seen him. If you stare straight ahead he will let you

pass and take refuge in immobility. If your eyes betray you he will flee as this one did. His wild, hurt eyes are so set in the side of the head that he can see backwards almost as well as forwards. But his habit of quiet surveillance has its dangers. I know a shepherd who takes advantage of it, just as Hudson's "Caleb Bawcombe" did: on seeing a hare lying in its form, he orders his dog to remain still, then, circling round, approaches the hare which, as often as not, keeps its eyes on the waiting dog and lies thus until the man is near enough to break its skull with a blow of his crook; and I have seen a gipsy, whose fire I had slept by, walk past a crouching hare and, using his knowledge of the same habit, fall suddenly on it. That man was also an adept at "hare-sucking," which is an imitation of the strange, low-pitched love-notes of mating hares, made, in my belief, by grinding the teeth together.

But the hare is not readily caught napping, and the "treasons" he plays on his foes make up for the occasional lapses that provide a shepherd with a dinner: the hare knows well that he leaves a tell-tale trail wherever he runs, and by twisting, doubling, side-tracking, or making prodigious leaps of twelve or fifteen feet to break the continuity of the scent, he outwits his many pursuers. Shakespeare, who knew everything, knew of those tricks:

How he outruns the winds and with what care
He cranks and crosses with a thousand doubles:
The many musets through the which he goes
Are like a labyrinth to amaze his foes.

Within a few weeks now the first leverets will be born: wide-eyed creatures, very different from the young rabbits, naked, blind, and deaf. Nature creates many lovely things, but none more so than young hares, with their large, beautiful eyes and soft russet fur.

In defence of them again, the doe refutes her timid appearance. She will stand up to most things when her precious litter is in danger: I have seen one boxing at the muzzle of a bullock that had strayed too near the form; and stoats and weasels have felt the power of her hind legs.

Scores of hares, a veritable tawny drove of them, were still shifting across the next field when I climbed the stile: away they loped towards the fringes of the downs where lambs bleated and plovers, mad as the hares themselves, wailed and tumbled in the half-hearted light: on the hares went, canter-

ing, lolloping, for ever wandering and chivvied; large on the rampart of the earthwork where ancient warriors slept dustily, then away out of sight to lie up for the day or to fight out their fantastic battles.

Farley Chamberlayne.

VI

"RED IN TOOTH AND CLAW"

So still, as if death had touched him as he made his humble way across the track, the slow-worm lay there taking refuge in immobility at the sound of my footsteps. His slender, writhen body was like a casting in bronze, or a girl's bangle partially straightened out. His back a coppery shade, his sharply-defined sides almost brick-red, his skin shone with a glaze one would have expected only on pottery. His black anxious eyes alone revealed the fact that he was a living creature. There was nothing reptilian in these eyes: tiny though they were, their expression seemed evident, one of mild apprehension as though he knew only too well the fate usually meted out to his kind.

One could gaze at him for minutes on end and the illusion of inanimation persisted. It was as if the slim, elaborate handle of a vase fashioned out of highly-polished stone had been dropped there, and apart from the strange, wonder-evoking beauty of his lowly body, the way in which he retained for so long such an attitude of absolute immobility, was a matter for admiration. Nature endows her children with many subtle methods of defence.

The wild grace of a stag, the stoop of a peregrine, the cool majesty of trees, the unreal beauty of a moonlit swan-lake, these are things for which we are grateful and which gratify the senses, but it is the contemplation of such lowly and unobtrusive beauty as the slow-worm that perhaps more than anything impresses upon us the infinite range and wonder of Nature.

Yet this is a beauty little appreciated: what unloving, unseeing eye dubbed it slow-worm when it can glide with snake-like grace; or blind-worm with its small, bright, gentle eyes so evident? Few people know the slow-worm, for it is secretive in its ways (though like so many creatures it enjoys basking in sunshine), but when they do discover one, their trampling feet are all too ready to perform what seems to them a meritorious deed. This attitude was abundantly illus-

trated while I contemplated the slow-worm in the cart track. A boy of fifteen or sixteen approached with three children. They halted, curious to know what I was watching, and seeing the slow-worm, began excitedly to nudge each other and whisper.

"Snay-uk !" the boy informed me gratuitously. They gazed round-eyed from slow-worm to me, and back again.

I tried to explain that the slow-worm was neither worm nor snake, but in fact a lizard which had lost its legs in the process of evolution. I could have been pedantic and pompous and told them that it had eyelids as other lizards have, and that its small black tongue was notched, not forked, that the sides of its lower jaw were united in front, all attributes alien to a snake. But even had they understood my words it would have been no use. There he was, self-evidently a snake, and as such must be killed.

"Even if it was a snake why should it be killed?"

"For because 'tis a snay-uk," this half-impatiently, half-pityingly, for I was obviously quite mad not to realize it was a snake and fit only for slaughter. For them, and unfortunately for most people, to decide a thing is a snake is automatically to decree its death. Nor was it anything but waste of breath to point out that the slow-worm, and real snakes, too, had just as much right to live as any other more attractive animal. Their eyes went dull. It is a thought their parents do not like, either. They do not try to discount it by argument, they dismiss it, it is beyond their comprehension. Townspeople have far more sensibility than country-folk, far more sympathy for wild creatures. That may sound somewhat arbitrary, but whatever the reason, it is true.

"Be gooen to kill un?" demanded the boy, and upon my declining, volunteered to do it himself as I was "afeered." "Feyther put spade through tu-three last month." Eventually I had to take the quiescent slow-worm in my hands. That evoked much awe-stricken comment. I think they regarded me as being more sinister than the "snay-uk" itself, and clattered off down the track, casting back many a glance.

But for the fact that the slow-worm now manifested surprising power and litheness in trying to slip through my fingers, the illusion of polished stone would have persisted, for his scales were so close-set, lacking the rough "keels" of the grass snake, for example, and so beautifully smooth that his skin seemed one continuous piece. The slow-worm casts

its skin three or four times a year, according to the plenitude or dearth of slugs, its principal food, as the sloughing is in response to need for more room for the growing body.

When I put him down again he lay still a while, fifteen inches of sinuous immobility, then cautiously, slowly, black tongue flickering, made his way over the ruts and, approaching the foliage of the bank, glided out of sight with sudden graceful speed. Half an hour later I returned through the field that adjoined the track and, walking in a bed of rushes, came across a hedgehog, who also had taken refuge in immobility. With his head tucked out of sight he lay there, a spiney mass, prepared to wait hours if necessary, in the interests of his welfare. But patience is as essential to me in my job, so, sitting on the roots of a hawthorn, I waited for him to emerge from his attitude of circumspection. Fifteen minutes passed before his short, conical head rose, his grey-white whiskery face showed. A small nose wavered carefully, sniff-sniffing the air, full of the rich odour of hawthorn blossom and the subtle acrid scent of yellow flags.

As he moved through the rushes, snuffling and hesitating, I caught sight of the slow-worm (it may have been another) gliding down the bank a few feet away and into the bed in search of slugs. Their ways were bound to meet and it was strangely disturbing to watch this drama, for such it was, with the two figures all unaware of each other. The hedgehog nosed about so noisily that I thought the slow-worm would hear him, but the latter glided on unconsciously and in a few moments the hedgehog, ambling nearer, saw or smelt him, pattered forward, seized him by the head and, while his victim was still writhing, began to eat him there and then, for all this I saw from not two strides away.

I let the hedgehog finish his meal in peace before I disturbed him. Such was the fate of the lowly beauty I had admired so much. I could, of course, have averted or postponed his doom. But had I not been there it would have gone the same way, and to appreciate Nature one must content oneself with the role of spectator and learn not to interfere in the working of an infinite and wonderful scheme in which every detail plays its part. In Nature death is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. Death is the fountain of life.

Kilve.

ALAN JENKINS.

MONKS AND MR. BASKERVILLE

THERE appeared some eighteen months ago for the information of an over-credulous public, a book entitled "English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries," by Geoffrey Baskerville, M.A. Whatever the defects of the author, false modesty is not one of them. At long last, it appears, after four centuries, the world is being told the true story of the state of the monasteries on the eve of their destruction. Previous writers, he informs us, have belonged either to the "scavenging party," which reviled the monasteries, or to the "merry Englanders," who lamented them. Now at last, it seems, Mr. Baskerville has summed up the evidence with due impartiality, and has delivered a considered judgment on the whole controversy.

The judgment can hardly be proclaimed a favourable one. He tells us that nominally the monks still prayed; nominally they dispensed hospitality and gave alms. The reality, however, was far different. About prayer Mr. Baskerville—perhaps wisely—says little; he tells us, however, that under the pretence of being hospitable the monks were setting up boarding-houses and acting as inn-keepers. Their almsgiving was meagre in quantity and did as much to multiply beggars as to relieve them. They were the bankers of the age—though the author hastily assures us that we must not get the impression that they were educated. Even to teach the boys who were being brought up in the monasteries they had to call in the laity. The nuns were in no better condition. Finally, they were tyrannized over by founders and patrons and by bishops. Consequently, when Cromwell's visitors arrived, they found communities of men and women who made little pretence of carrying out their duties as monks and nuns, and who were thoroughly disgruntled and anxious to throw off their religious habits. With eagerness, therefore, they snatched at the ample pensions which were offered them, abandoned their monasteries, and spent the rest of their days in happiness and comfort—themselves not a whit the poorer.

Mr. Baskerville has been fortunate. The world has taken him at his own valuation. Reviewers smiled on his work. University lecturers recommended it. It was found on the shelves of lending libraries. It was spoken of by people

who visited the remains of what once were monasteries. Even Catholics were troubled by it. When I first heard of its appearance I, too, felt saddened; and not till recently did my distress turn to bewilderment. For only of late have I had the opportunity of reading the book and of finding therein a travesty of history more hollow and unconvincing than seemed possible in this enlightened twentieth century. For this monument of learning, this book for which the world has for four centuries been waiting, is based on a misrepresentation of facts and a distortion of evidence which can only impose upon the very prejudiced or satisfy the very ill-informed.

A first glance at the book suggests surprise that a subject which cost Cardinal Gasquet two long volumes can be summarily and finally dismissed by the author in a bare 300 pages of large print. That surprise does not diminish as one's acquaintance with the book becomes more intimate. The style, far from possessing the dignity and restraint expected from an important historical work, is trifling and colloquial. The author's denunciation of "sentimentalist" admirers of monasticism, his disparagement in particular of "the tear-stained pages of Cardinal Gasquet," his use of such phrases as "sob-stuff writers," apologists "of lachrymose disposition," and other similar question-begging catchwords, his statement that the visitors of Edward VI had "obscene objections" to pictures of the saints, are all suggestive of at least a lack of good taste. Though small in themselves, these aberrations yet reveal a haste and carelessness disastrous to true historical research, and prepare us for those greater defects which are to be found in the matter of the book.

Turning to the strictly historical part of the work, it is clear that the author has a case to make out, and that for this purpose he employs anything that comes to hand. His methods are interesting, and typical of those used times without number in the past, and doubtless destined to be used as frequently in the future. There are exaggerations, which go far beyond the evidence that the author submits, and in some cases, beyond anything that could conceivably be submitted. Thus King Offa is set down summarily as a ruffian, though the vague knowledge we have of his shadowy figure forbids alike categorical praise or condemnation. With more justice he might have attached the label to Henry VIII,

whom he makes a veritable Saul among the prophets by calling him "almost the first theologian in Europe." He tells us further that at the time of Cromwell's visitation, "large clerical families were already becoming the rule." We wait for the evidence with which Mr. Baskerville is to substantiate a claim so sweeping, but we wait in vain; only one poor example is cited (p. 123). He informs us that "the plain man's view" about Henry VIII's oath of supremacy was probably that of the chronicler Hall, who maintains that those who objected, got what they deserved. Yet Mr. Baskerville makes no effort to prove this very doubtful opinion. Hall is only saying what we should expect him to say out of devotion to the royal interests.¹ Mr. Baskerville's claim is negatived by the witness of the martyr, Richard Reynolds of Syon, who before his execution declared that all men thought about it as he did.

Side by side with such unfounded generalizations are a number of equally baseless innuendoes, contradictions and half-truths. The Carthusian Order is said to have retained its "primitive fervour longer than any of its rivals." But why could he not have said that it had never lost that fervour? This would have been less invidious and more accurate. Again, when he is telling us that an inconsiderate world has never understood that selfless and devoted character, Thomas Cromwell, he refers to the dear memories left by his generous almsgiving to the London poor. He forgets his own absence of sympathy with the monastic almsgiving, which "did as much to increase beggars as to relieve them." This generous meed of praise which is given to Cromwell he extends also to Cromwell's minions. Were Cromwell's visitors, he asks, "the scoundrels that sentimentalist writers picture them?" What about Dr. Leigh, for example? It is true that he had unpleasant qualities, but does not Lord Audeley, the Chancellor, say of him: "I hear not but that he suiteth himself right indifferently in the execution of his charge"? Unfortunately, Mr. Baskerville refrains from telling us that the whole career of Lord Audeley was "that of a submissive instrument in the hands of Henry VIII and his great minister Cromwell," and that his conduct when he presided at the trials of More and Fisher "is universally reprobated." I quote from James Gairdner, whose impartiality is not likely to be called in question.

¹ He dedicated his *Chronicle* to Henry VIII's son.

It is time to turn to the more fundamental defects of the book. Of these one of the chief is the author's failure to prove his claims about the pensions granted to the ex-Religious; indeed he hardly attempts the formidable task. It is true that he speaks much about them, and about the careers of the former monks and friars. He says, quite correctly, that some of the more important of the dispossessed were given high positions and acquired great wealth. He reminds us how affluent the suppression left the monks at Pershore, and tells how the ex-abbot of Hayles was able to lend money to the King. He speaks of the fine house of the ex-abbot of Abingdon at Cumnor, and of the ex-abbot of Cirencester's chaplain and twelve servants. Apart from the abbots and priors, he says, some of the ordinary Religious got benefices; for the rest, for those for whom benefices were not available (and as the number of Religious was several thousand, they must have been many) there remained a pension, paid through the Court of Augmentations. On the average, these pensions would amount to about £5 a year, which, according to his valuation, would be about £150 in modern money. In short, all were allowed to live in comfort, and a few in luxury.

None would deny that individuals profited greatly from the suppression; again none would deny that pensions were granted, though it should be added that Mr. Baskerville is not consistent in the scale he uses when expressing sixteenth-century money in modern values. Much more open to debate, however, is the actual payment of the pensions. Consider the situation. By 1539 the Government was in desperate need of money. Indeed this partly accounts for the suppression, first of the smaller and then of the larger monasteries. As the reign went on, financial embarrassments increased. There was war with Scotland and war with France. At his wit's end for money, Henry inflicted immeasurable harm on trade and on the general happiness and prosperity of the country by debasing the coinage—which incidentally would diminish the value of the annual £5 pension. Are we to believe that despite these immense difficulties, Henry's Government continued to pay these monastic pensions regularly and in full? Was the practice maintained during the reign of Edward VI? The Government had nothing to gain by such fidelity. Ill-treatment of the ex-Religious would not cost Henry his crown in 1542 when it had not done so

in 1536. There was nothing, therefore, to keep the Government faithful to the obligation it had taken upon itself except high principle, and such high principle was as foreign to the Governments of Henry VIII, Edward VI and Elizabeth as it was to Machiavelli. Expediency, not principle, guided their policy, and, most emphatically, expediency did not demand the payment of the pensions.

In contrast to Mr. Baskerville's high opinion of the Court of Augmentations is the verdict of a contemporary, an ex-friar by name Henry Brinklow, who said in his "Complaynt of Roderick Mors" that it was better to be in Hell than to be involved in this court, and added that there was a common saying among the people: "Christ, for Thy bitter passion, save me from the Court of Augmentation." Possibly there is no great significance in Brinklow's employment of abuse, for there is little that he does not criticize. But what is important, is that, though he vilifies several other courts, the Court of Augmentations is singled out as quite the worst for "extortion, oppression and bribery."

Clearly, then, in attempting to prove the uprightness and fidelity of the Court of Augmentations, Mr. Baskerville is attempting a formidable, though not necessarily an impossible, task. How does he achieve it? He devotes to the matter just half a page (257) in which he says that there are in the Public Record Office receipts for the payment of pensions in Oxfordshire and the neighbouring counties. Again, he states that in 1552, 1554 and 1569 the Government appointed commissions to investigate the condition of the pensioners, so that fraud might be avoided.¹ Further than that he tells us nothing; he supplies no details of the number of pensioners, of the amount that was paid, or of the regularity of the payments; as to all these matters we are left in darkness. It may be possible to prove that the unfortunate ex-Religious received their pensions, but we still await the proof.

Nevertheless, though he expects a trustful disposition in his readers, Mr. Baskerville is far from showing it himself, at least with regard to evidence even remotely favourable to the monks. Naturally enough he is at pains to belittle the Pilgrimage of Grace, and in particular the barbarity with

¹ He has written an earlier article in *The English Historical Review* (1933) on the grant of pensions to monks. The evidence he there brings forward provides very frail foundation for his confident and optimistic theories about the pensions.

which it was suppressed. Who, he asks, was more implicated than the abbot of Salley? Why, he was even restored to his monastery by the rebels! We know that he was condemned to death, but, he asks, what evidence is there that he actually suffered?

There is this evidence. We know that on two occasions prior to the abbot's capture and once afterwards, the King sent violent orders for his execution to his commanders in the North. We know that he was condemned. It is clear that his chaplain, Richard Estgate, was put to death. It is also clear that two of his monks were exempted from a general pardon granted some months after the abbot's condemnation. Yet we are asked by Mr. Baskerville to believe that while ordinary monks were specifically exempted from a general pardon, the abbot was granted an individual one. Finally, the chronicler Stowe asserts that the abbot was executed. As Mr. Baskerville has previously shown confidence in Stowe (*e.g.*, in the matter of Cromwell's charity to the poor of London) why should he refuse to do so here?¹ The reason is not difficult to see. If there be question of evidence against the monks, Mr. Baskerville will drag to light its minutest details. But, should it favour them, then no one is more severe and more exacting in his demands than our present author. Nevertheless, this cannot conceal from us the fact that we have far stronger evidence that the abbot of Salley was executed than we have in Mr. Baskerville's book, and perhaps anywhere else, to prove that the monks received their pensions. On his own principles, therefore, he has failed to prove his case.

The most serious criticism against this work is the use of authorities. Incidentally, among those cited there is one conspicuous omission, namely, the three volumes of Gasquet's "*Collectanea Anglo-Premonstratensia*." Beyond, I think, three casual references to them, they are ignored. Mr. Baskerville's excuse seems to be that the documents cited do not go beyond 1500. The excuse hardly rings true. A man who can vault centuries, may surely take the decades in his stride. If he quotes an example of 1303 to illustrate what was happening in 1536, he should not object to a backward glance of a paltry forty years. The real reason would appear

¹ Actually the Abbot was an old man and he may have died before his execution. But in that case he can hardly be cited as an illustration of the tender heart of Henry VIII.

to be that the documents were edited by Gasquet. Yet granted that Gasquet might naturally be partial, and that his editing of the documents has been criticized, granted also that his conclusions are favourable to the monks, to ignore such a large collection of documents, bearing directly on the subject, needs much justification.

Moreover, Mr. Baskerville is less careful about avoiding the work of editors confessedly opposed to the monasteries. Thomas Wright, the editor of the "Letters Relating to the Suppression of Monasteries," avowed that he regarded that event as "the greatest blessing conferred by Providence on this country since the first introduction of the Christian religion." Yet the objective and impartial Mr. Baskerville can cite this work without question.

Moreover, he makes even Wright's evidence blacker than it really is. Nothing is more obvious from these letters than the strong opposition made to Cromwell's visitors. Of this he says next to nothing. We hear little of the Carthusians and nothing of those Franciscans who defied the royal representatives, hurling in their teeth the words that to acknowledge Henry VIII's supremacy was against both their profession and the rule of St. Francis. We are not told that the Abbot of Rievaulx refused to admit the jurisdiction of the visitors, that the Prior of Bridlington protested that he did not want the King as a patron, that Dr. Layton forced his way into a house of Gilbertines in spite of their opposition, and that the same visitor found the canons of the college of the Newarke, Leicester, so opposed to him that he called them the most obstinate and factious that he had ever known. Not a reference is made to that touching letter of the Abbot of Faversham, who says that his abbey is impoverished and that it would pay him to accept a pension and go away. The Abbot only begs the King to keep the pension, and allow him to stay, for he considers more "the miserable state and condition that our poor house should stand in, if such a thing should come to pass, than I do mine own private office and dignity." Convents send petitions that they may be allowed to remain; in some cases the commissioners intercede for them. The Bishop of Lincoln hastily visits his diocese in hopes of keeping out Cromwell's minions. The Abbot of St. Albans says that he will beg all the days of his life rather than surrender. But of this scarcely an echo lingers in the Baskerville pages. It is the testimony, be it remem-

bered, of no tearful sentimentalists but of Cromwell's chosen visitors.

A more flagrant example of misuse of evidence is seen in the treatment of another authority, namely, the "Visitations of the Diocese of Norwich, 1492—1532." During the course of these years, bishops Goldwell and Nicke visited between 170 and 180 religious houses. The normal procedure on such a visitation was for the bishop to interview the Religious individually, and if nothing was found worthy of particular notice, the visitation was "dissolved." If, on the other hand, a more detailed examination was necessary, the visitation was "prorogued." None of this, I presume, Mr. Baskerville would dispute; indeed he says as much himself (p. 177).¹ Now, turning to the actual visitations, we find that on about 125 or 130 occasions, the visitation is either said to have been dissolved or else from other circumstances it is clear that the house did not require any change. A dozen cases are doubtful, while in some 35 or 40 cases the visitation was prorogued.

But the fact of prorogation did not necessarily imply any great abuse. At the College of Stoke, for instance, it was often occasioned by disputes about the statutes. In three cases, however, there were fairly serious abuses, namely, at Wymondham in 1492, and in 1514,² and still more at Walsingham in this latter year. These are three out of the four occasions on which the bishop went to the length of deposing a regularly elected Superior. But the only two visitations on which Mr. Baskerville dwells at any length are chosen from among these (see pp. 81—82, 86—87). The other visitations, over 130 in number, might not exist for all the attention he pays to them. Look up in the index Buckenham Priory, Bungay Nunnery, Carrow Nunnery, Ingham Priory, Ixworth Priory, Pentney Priory and many other religious houses in the Norwich diocese, and you will find that they receive hardly a mention. And this because the visitations tell us scarcely anything that is not to their credit. There is no mention of Wymondham Abbey after 1520. Again for the reason that it had improved and the bishop found there scarcely anything that was blameworthy. For the same

¹ Actually the last paragraph of this page and the first few lines of the next are in inverted commas, but it is impossible to find the source of the quotation. It is neither the "Dictionary of National Biography" nor the Norwich visitations to which Mr. Baskerville refers. However, he identifies himself with the quotation. This is another example of that carelessness which characterizes the whole book.

² Though actually the visitation was dissolved on this occasion.

reason Walsingham is not mentioned after that date. On the other hand, we find no reference to the visitation of St. Benet's Abbey, Norfolk, before 1532. For this was the first occasion on which the visitors found anything seriously wrong.

One last example may be given of this suppression of inconvenient evidence. Savine, he says (p. 31), has calculated that not more than 3 per cent of monastic income was spent in charity. Now Savine was a scholar and no mere mountebank, and his opinion must be treated with respect. But did Savine really make this calculation? Significantly enough Mr. Baskerville gives no reference though he does so when he quotes Savine on other matters (cf. p. 60). However, the most important passage which Savine has written on monastic charity is found from pp. 227 to 240 of his "English Monasteries on the Eve of the Dissolution," and there he reaches quite different conclusions. The 3 per cent, which is here mentioned, represents the returns of the commissioners of 1535, but he goes on to say (and this Mr. Baskerville suppresses) "it must be remembered that the commissioners of 1535 did not record *all* [my italics] the monastic alms, and not even the whole of the compulsory alms, but only the alms free of the tenth" (Savine, *op. cit.*, p. 239). This point he develops on the next page. Unless, therefore, Mr. Baskerville is relying on some other little-known work of Savine,¹ in which case the reference should have been given, he is laying himself open to the charge of gross carelessness or actual suppression of evidence.

Mr. Baskerville's methods are sufficiently patent. What will serve against the monks is to be pounced upon and magnified. On a foundation of straw he will build a tower. On the other hand, all that is in their favour must be stamped out, covered over and forgotten. So indeed he produces a story; it might be called a shocking story or even an amusing story; but it cannot be called a true story; and least of all does it deserve to be termed history.

W. F. REA.

¹ Mr. Baskerville may be quoting from p. 265 of this same work, where Savine repeats more shortly what he has said earlier in the book on this point.

A POISON TRIAL A CENTURY AGO

THE vogue of the "Thriller" or crime story, accessible even to the multitude in convenient sixpenny editions, has now become so universal that we are all of us in danger of developing into amateur toxicologists and experts in medical jurisprudence. We may learn the various symptoms of poisoning by oxalic acid, strychnine, caustic potash, corrosive sublimate or cyanide of potassium. We have a good idea of the conditions which accelerate or delay the onset of *rigor mortis*. We are familiar with the kind of investigation which the detective undertakes in order to discover where a particular poison was purchased. We are fully aware that it is no longer possible to send a child round to the nearest chemist to buy a pennyworth of arsenic, and we have been duly put on our guard, in case we ourselves contemplate committing a murder, against the danger of leaving finger-prints on the tray and the tumblers, or of allowing sediment to remain in the cup which contained the fatal dose.

But this kind of knowledge was not so widely disseminated in the early years of the nineteenth century, neither was there in those days any legislation effectively restricting the sale of poisons. It seems highly probable that many crimes must have passed undetected and even unsuspected, for quite a number of cases which did come into court show on the one hand how very easy it was to procure deadly drugs without any sort of inquiry, and how very incompetent at the same time were the country apothecaries and surgeons who gave evidence in cases of suspected poisoning. No medical certificate of the cause of death was then required, and the formalities attendant on the burial of any deceased person were often ill-understood or irregularly enforced. One curious example of a suspicious death which occurred in Dorsetshire in the year 1838 has recently come to my notice. It has characteristic features which make it perhaps worth recalling to memory as an illustration of the rather barbarous conditions which prevailed and of the procedure then followed. Few of us commonly realize how enormous is the improvement which the science of the past hundred years has brought about in the prevention and detection of crime.

On November 15th, in the year 1838, there occurred in the village of Powerstock (Dorset) the death of one Mary Hounsell, the wife of a rough uneducated countryman, John Hounsell. She had been ill for only a few days previously, her illness being attended with violent fits of vomiting. Two months later a labourer named James Gale died in the same village, and within a fortnight John Hounsell requested the Vicar of Powerstock to publish the banns of marriage between himself and Gale's widow. There seems to have been some scandal and gossip among the neighbours at the time. The Vicar's suspicions were aroused, and he contrived to arrange that a third party upon some pretext or other should intervene to forbid the banns. A local sensation was caused, and it ended in an order being given by the requisite authority that the bodies, both of Mary Hounsell and James Gale, should be exhumed, and an inquest held upon the remains. The exhumation took place during the night, and the two frail coffins, in the absence of any suitable building where they could be housed to await the inquest next day, were deposited on the raised step which marked off the chancel of the little parish church. We happen to possess the account of an eyewitness of the scene which took place when the bodies were viewed by the jury. He had met a local official, bound by his duties to be present, and had been persuaded to accompany him. They found the coroner and the jury already assembled, together with a small group of villagers and four or five doctors, resident in towns not far off, some of whom had been summoned to attend while the rest had come out of mere curiosity. In describing what followed our witness reports :

We followed the jury and the doctors to the door of the church ; but there we learnt from the sexton that, if we were not obliged to go in, we should be wise in remaining outside, and that we could see everything through the window of the chancel. He said that the stench was already very offensive through the whole building. We took his advice and went to the chancel window. There was not the slightest difficulty in watching all that took place through the long narrow window as easily and exactly as if we had been inside.

There can, I think, be no doubt that the window thus described was a "low side window," the window through which,

in pre-Reformation times, the server at Mass thrust his arm and rang a hand-bell in order to give notice to those who loitered in the churchyard that the elevation was near at hand. In that way they had time to crowd into the back of the church and "see the Body of Christ" when the priest raised it on high at the moment of the consecration. There are many scores of such windows in late medieval English churches, many of them still retaining traces of a small shutter at the bottom which could be easily opened and closed again.

Our observer describes the jury as manifesting very plainly that they found the task imposed upon them extremely distasteful. No one could tell what they would be likely to find when the coffins were uncovered, and he adds that "even of the doctors who were there, not one had ever before seen a corpse which had been buried as long as three weeks, to say nothing of three months." The sexton had no difficulty in removing the lids, they were held in these cheap coffins by only a few nails and screws. A shroud in each case veiled the contents, and this was only slightly discoloured, while a few little bunches of herbs still lay on the surface. But our witness continues :

The faces of both were still covered with the face-cloths; nothing could be seen of either body. The sexton was desired by the coroner to remove them, but his courage failed and he refused. He would not listen either to command or to persuasion, and stubbornly drew back in evident fear. There was no one else who volunteered; the doctors said it was not their business; the jury (and their countenances at this moment would have been a wonderful subject for a picture) stood still; the coroner clearly believed that his part of the business was to give orders. To end it, he spoke loud and angrily; and the sexton yielded. He went to the first coffin, and with his back half-turned towards it and averted head, so that he might not see what might be beneath the cloth, with a quick pull he snatched it away.

Everyone was surprised: the face of the dead woman was scarcely changed. The skin had become dark, like mahogany, contrasting strongly with the usual pallidness of a corpse, but that was all. Every feature was distinct, the eyes scarcely sunk, the nose and mouth

were natural, and her black hair, plainly drawn across the forehead, added to the calm and almost living expression of the whole countenance. Except for the peculiar colour, she might have died only as many hours as she had died weeks before.

After this experience the sexton made no further difficulty about uncovering the other body. The man, James Gale, had not yet been dead three weeks, but the sight revealed was, in this case, very shocking. Corruption had set in. The features were half swollen, half decayed and recognition was impossible. It was decided, however, that the evidence of the carpenter and the sexton who could swear that James Gale's body had been buried in the coffin now before them, sufficed for the purpose. The coroner and the jury accordingly retired to a room in the little ale-house where further evidence was to be taken, while the doctors were left to perform an autopsy and to arrive at some conclusion as to the cause of death. It was necessary that the bodies should be made conveniently accessible for the use of their instruments. There was no furniture in the church suitable for the purpose except the communion table, and so on this the two corpses were laid, and there in the chancel the surgeons set about what the narrator calls their "unclean, bloody and disgusting work," the table and the floor being stained with frequent patches of unavoidable litter and dropped fragments. The examination took some two hours, and then or at a later time the decision was finally reached that the woman had unquestionably been poisoned with arsenic. Sufficient arsenic was found, they declared, to have killed half a dozen people, and it was the presence of this in such large quantities which had caused the extraordinary preservation of her body and features. No definite conclusion could be reached in the case of the man James Gale. He might have been poisoned, but ~~their~~ combined medical knowledge could assert no more than that arsenic in this instance was not the agent employed. In the end the coroner's jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against John Hounsell for administering arsenic to his wife.

It is a strange thing, as the eyewitness I have before cited records, that in the trial which followed not a word seems to have been said by anyone about the desecration of the communion table and chancel by the use to which they had been put. As if by common consent all reference to the matter was

carefully avoided. He states that "the church had to be shut up for three weeks after on account of the stench which had penetrated through and saturated the entire building," while he adds that "the communion table was then restored to its former sacred purpose." Writing in days long before the terrible scenes enacted in so many of the churches of France and Spain with which the last quarter of a century has rendered us familiar, our Anglican witness, imbued with a Victorian sense of the religious proprieties, seems to have been pardonably shocked.

The trial of the accused, John Hounsell, came on in July, 1839, at the assizes held in Dorchester over which Mr. Justice Erskine presided. Mr. Southcombe, a surgeon residing in Bridport, who with the help of other doctors had conducted the post-mortem of Mary Hounsell after the exhumation, deposed that there was no appearance of disease in the body. Death was due to poison. "Gritty particles were adhering to the inner coat of the stomach which was excessively inflamed." It is curious to note that in cross-examination Mr. Southcombe admitted that "he had never before analysed a stomach containing arsenic and that he was aware that arsenic was sometimes used as a remedy for cutaneous disorders." Mr. Herepath, a chemist of Bristol, deposed that he had analysed some of the organs sent to him and that he was satisfied that death had been caused by arsenic introduced into the system within the last forty-eight hours of life.

But the most curious evidence was that given by the widow of James Gale, which is thus summarized in the report of the *Dorset County Chronicle* (July 25, 1839):

I am a widow living at Powerstock. James Gale, my husband, died about old Christmas [Twelfth Night, January 6th?] last. I knew Mary Hounsell and her husband. I attended Mary Hounsell on the Monday of the week in which she died. Earlier in her illness I made a sweat for her. The prisoner was present. She was taken ill on the Sunday and the sweat was made on the Tuesday after, and on the Monday after that I was again sent for. Her husband carried the sweat to her bedroom. I afterwards went upstairs, her husband was there. She said she was sick and could not take any more. She was vomiting. After Mr. Hounsell,¹ the surgeon, came. On

¹ It is curious that this surgeon should have borne the same surname as the accused. He may, of course, have been a relative.

Friday I sat up with her all night. Mr. Hounsell sent medicines for her in taking which she vomited every time. . . On Sunday she was better; on Monday I went and made some broth and afterwards gave her some tea and bread and butter. She died about twelve on Thursday night. I was not present but was present just before; her husband was then in the kitchen. Prisoner sent me to Mr. Roper, a druggist at Bridport, before the illness of his wife, with a note. Mr. Roper gave me a small parcel in paper, which I put in my pocket. The paper broke in my pocket, and some of its contents came out. I afterwards gave the parcel to the prisoner. The day on which Mary Hounsell died I ate some pears which I had in my pocket when I fetched the parcel, and they made me sick all the afternoon and night. There was no peculiar taste in the pears. I examined my pocket the next morning and found some white powder stuff which I shook out near the window. I afterwards saw the prisoner. I asked him what was the parcel I brought from Bridport. He told me it was poison. After my husband's death I was intimate with the prisoner and went to Radipole with him. That might be a fortnight after my husband's death. Prisoner made me an offer of marriage. Banns were published.

The suggestion that a quantity of arsenic was put up in a paper bag and carried loose with pears in a woman's pocket is sufficiently startling. Mrs. Gale's statement was corroborated in part by the druggist, who apparently stated that he had also given her on the same occasion a packet of corrosive sublimate. And further confirmation came from James Daniel, a surgeon at Beaminster, who deposed that he had attended her after she had eaten the pears. "I should say distinctly," he declared, "that the symptoms were those of poison from arsenic. There is no particular taste about arsenic. Corrosive sublimate has a peculiar burning and coppery taste."

When Mrs. Gale was cross-examined, she explained that the prisoner, Hounsell, was a cattle doctor and people went to him for such complaints as the itch. She also declared that the prisoner and his wife lived happily together, and that during her illness he was very kind and attentive to her. At this date, of course, a prisoner on trial was not admitted to give evidence in his own behalf. But he was not wholly cut

off from presenting a statement in his own words. On the occasion with which we are here concerned, the coroner who had presided over the inquest testified that in the course of that investigation the prisoner had made a voluntary statement which he, as coroner, had taken down. In this Hounsell had explained that he made a regular practice of curing mangy dogs, that the drug procured by Mrs. Gale was for that purpose, and that he was also in the habit of treating people for the itch in which treatment the same remedies were employed.

There seems, unfortunately, to be no record of the judge's summing up, but we know that the prisoner was acquitted. No direct evidence was available to prove that he had administered the drug, and it was contended in his favour that the arsenic was kept on a shelf in the room where his wife was lying. Though feeble and very ill, she might have had strength to reach it and mix it with something she ate or drank, either with the direct intention of committing suicide, or through some mistaken idea that what came from a druggist was medicine and might be capable of giving her relief.

In any case, we must conclude that the selling over the counter of substances like arsenic and corrosive sublimate was a terrible danger. It would be easy to cite from the poison trials of the period an almost indefinite number of cases in which such deadly preparations could be purchased in pennyworths by anyone who took the trouble to go about from one druggist to another with some plausible tale. In this way it would have been easy to accumulate quite a considerable quantity of poison. Moreover, as already pointed out, the average medical practitioner was quite out of his depth in dealing with this insidious form of crime and had almost as little experience in the use of antidotes as he had in discovering by analysis the toxic matter which was causing the mischief. There were no Lord Peter Wimseys, Colonel Gethryns, Dr. Priestleys or Hercule Poirots available to deal with such cases in the early nineteenth century.

R. H. SUTTON.

MISCELLANEA

I. CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTES

ROMAN VIGNETTES.

VI

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

THE name has a lovely ring. It conjures up the vision of forest paths in the cutting winter air when the dark green firs are mantled fleecily with newly clinging snow: or, high up in the mountains, of a white expanse that glitters and glistens under the summer sun and, when evening falls, stretches eerie and forlorn, like some mysterious region untrodden of man, chill and chaste beneath a tremulous moon. A small rough shrine of stone or just a picture of wood hung against the rock: one or two climbers, rope coiled across their shoulders and from their wrists *piccosse* swinging, who offer to the Madonna a bright blue nose-gay of gentian or *Alpenveilchen* and pray for safety in their adventure, "Our Lady of the Snows" . . . surely this will be the invocation of sturdy mountaineers as they ascend with muscle and with nerve a'taut or, the ascent accomplished, look down into the valley far below as it basks in the sunny haze.

So no doubt it is. But the origin of name and feast has nothing to do with mountains. It concerns not the climber filling his lungs with fresh, invigorating air but rather the fourth-century Roman sweltering in the heat of August. The name belongs to one of the four principal Basilicas of the city, to that one dedicated to our Lady and more generally known as the Church of St. Mary Major. The story with which the name is associated (fact or legend according to your mind's bent) is as follows: A certain Roman patrician owned some property on the Esquiline hill and, as he had no children, desired to bequeath it to our Lady. Together with his wife, he prayed that the will of heaven might be made clear to them. One night in a dream they were bidden to build a church in honour of the Madonna on that part of the hill which they should find on the following morning covered with snow. The year was 358 A.D., the actual date August 5th, when the Fahrenheit thermometer often reaches its century and all the Romans who can do so, have long since fled to the sea-coast or the hills. The Pope of the time, Liberius, had a similar dream. Pope and patrician with half a hundred others repaired to the Esquiline, then and for centuries later a somewhat isolated spot. They found that the dream had come true, that the crown

of the hill was thickly strewn with dazzling snow. So far the legend. The feast of our Lady *ad Nives* is still commemorated on that date and from the summit of the Borghese chapel in the church then begun, there floats downwards a shower of white rose-petals as a reminder that the story has not been forgotten.

The church was known also as the Liberian Basilica from the Pope who first consecrated it. I recall a picture shown in the Exhibition of Italian Art in London ten or eleven years ago. The name of the artist I cannot remember. Pope Liberius is in the foreground, engaged in laying the first stone or, more correctly, in cutting the initial piece of turf on the place where the church was to rise. The snow has been carefully shovelled back. The Pontiff is wielding what appears to be a long-handled hoe: but his stance and the crowd grouped in a semi-circle to one side of him are more reminiscent of the first tee at some minor championship than of any more strictly ecclesiastical function. However, what Liberius commenced, Sixtus III continued. His restoration is closely associated with the special honour paid to the Mother of God immediately after the Council of Ephesus which had solemnly proclaimed this, her proud title. The nave with its double line of marble pillars remains what Sixtus left it, in 432. There is a quiet and spacious dignity within the church. Its pavement old mosaic work of the twelfth century: the ceiling flat and low but with rich gold decoration on a white background, one of the loveliest in Rome (the gold was a gift from Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain and is said to have been the first ever brought to Europe from the New World): ancient mosaics gleam along the central nave, their date and meaning not quite certain though they may be older even than the year of the snow tradition: there is a warm glow from the dark red porphyry columns that rise above the high altar, with the crypt or shrine beneath it, where are preserved, according to tradition, some relics of the manger that was Christ's first cradle. These are exposed in a silver reliquary and were carried in procession every Christmas Eve before the Papal midnight Mass, celebrated always here. Behind the altar the figures of the medieval mosaic stand out in golden splendour from a *sfondo* of vine and olive green in which tendrils turn and twist and intertwine. In the centre are Christ and His Mother who receives a heavenly crown from her Son's hands. At either side angels adore and saints pray: the small kneeling image of Pope Nicholas IV dates the composition.

To right and left of the main altar are two rich chapels which are justly famous. In a sense they are out of keeping with the simple lines of the building but the richness of their ornamentation may be their justification. I say "may be" for artistic judgments are notoriously subjective. To the right, the chapel of Pope Sixtus with its large bronze tabernacle shaped like a temple

and held aloft by angels, at which St. Ignatius said his first Mass on the Christmas night of 1538, and its tombs of Sixtus V and of the saintly Dominican, Pius V, who excommunicated Queen Elizabeth. On the other side is the Borghese chapel, erected by Pope Paul V. "Unless words were gems," it has been written, "that would flame with many-coloured light upon the page and throw a tremulous glimmer into the reader's eyes, it were vain to attempt a description of this princely chapel." Others have found its splendour sham and forced and vulgar though all will praise its marble, many-hued and variously grained. Over the altar, dominating the heavy monuments of Paul V and Clement VIII, is the Madonna di San Luca, an age-old picture of our Lady, drawn, it is said, by St. Luke, but probably of the fifth or ninth century. Miracles have been attributed to it and many saints have made it the picture of their devotion.

It is time to leave marble and mosaic and return to the sunlight that bathes the stone steps as they mount to the church from the northern side. Southward it looks towards its sister Basilica of the Lateran; and to the east may be heard the shunting of trucks and engines in the modern railway yards. The Lateran is the senior Basilica of Rome: indeed it is the "mater et caput" of all the Christian churches in the world. But St. Mary Major's remains, as its epithet "maggiore" or "major" was intended to imply, the chief of the eighty or more Roman churches dedicated to the memory and honour of our Lady.

VII

LOAVES AND FISHES

One of the corners of Rome which is least spoilt or, if that seem too harsh a term, that has been little changed by constructors of new buildings or excavators of old ones, lies towards the south in the direction of the Appian Way. You may go to it from the Porta Capena where started originally that *Regina Viarum*, earliest of the great Roman highways: begun in 312 B.C. by the censor, Appius Claudius, it ran straight to Capua and Brindisi. There is something grim and determined about such a thoroughfare. The English country road attends upon Nature as a royal lady, adapts itself to her, turns hither and thither to suit her pleasure and whim: it may be rolling as a drunkard, it certainly is as gallant as any courtier. The ancient Latin was more direct and ruthless: Nature, like womankind, was to be subdued and kept in order. You continue under an avenue of spreading trees where bright-eyed *Balilla* boys play, and pass on your right the vast red ruins of Caracalla's baths. Here hundreds whiled away their all too leisure hours in rooms of hot or tepid air, chatted of politics and whispered scandalous tales in the cooler *frigidarium* or sauntered outside along the shady walks. But now on summer

evenings those same remains are peopled, not with the ghosts of yesteryear, but with merry, bustling citizens of to-day, who listen to opera played against the ruined walls while evening deepens into the purple magic of a Roman night. A little further on are small grey churches which call to mind some of the city's early martyrs: here Nereus and Achilleus, here again Cæsarius and over there Sixtus. The road proceeds to the Porta San Sebastiano between fenced-in gardens with the boundary of an occasional *vigna*, while here and there steps lead down to some re-discovered *columbarium* in which were deposited the ashes of the pagan dead.

The gateway of Saint Sebastian has two rounded towers which stand out in bold relief from the Aurelian ramparts. From it you look southwards down the Appian Way. At first this is flanked with dull brownish walls of beaten earth and across its cobbled surface rumble the wine carts from the *castelli* with gaily-coloured sunshades. Soon it is more open and runs between lofty pines and cypresses standing like melancholy sentinels beside the remains of tombs that line the way. How many pagans built their funeral vaults near some busy route that from their shadowy resting-place the dead might still sense the tread of passing feet, and the traveller turn aside for a moment to salute the memory of the departed! There is a haunting note of sadness in the Roman's thought of death. *Pulvis et umbra sumus*—and out of those dust and ashes rises nothing more substantial than some ghostly presence lingering on in the place where the mortal body was laid. The greatest of all Latin poems ends with the pathetic line: *vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras*. *Indignata sub umbras* . . . so might the pagan thought of death be epitomized. And for the rest . . . the notion of a forgotten grave that no friend would cherish and no stranger's Ave ever greet, was one of dread.

But where the ashes of the pagans were preserved in urn and jar, there did the faithful receive Christian burial. Over against the sad finality of *pulvis et umbra* is set the fresh and confident note: *Ego sum resurrectio et vita*. A mile or so from the city boundary are some of the many catacombs, those of Callixtus and Saint Sebastian along the Appian Way itself, others, named after Domitilla and Prætextatus, not far from it. These, as is well known, are series of galleries under ground (more than five hundred miles of them have been excavated) where, in the ages of persecution, the Christian dead were buried and where also Mass was celebrated at the martyrs' tombs. There may be three or four or even five tiers of galleries, one above the other; the upper ones are lit by *luminaria*, funnel-like openings through which a pale light filters down, those below are completely dark. The passages are narrow: you can touch the sides as you pass along: and there in the walls were the recesses in which were placed the dead. The recesses were closed with stone slabs which re-

corded name and age and sometimes trade or profession. Here and there are wider openings that lead to a crypt or chapel: in San Callisto, for example, to the vault of the Popes where were interred the bodies of eleven third-century Pontiffs (the inscriptions of four of them have been recovered), to the chapel of St. Cæcilia or that of Pope Cornelius. It is a strange experience to stand in the dark in one of the deserted galleries and hear Mass responses issue from some hidden chapel, betrayed only by the faint reflection of its candles, or the hymns of pilgrims passing with their lighted tapers like human glowworms in the dark.

All this, you may say, is very far from loaves and fishes. Not as far, perhaps, as you might think. One of the most interesting studies in the catacombs is that of the frescoes with which these small chapels are ornamented. They are sometimes symbolic so as not to reveal too much to a chance pagan who might have found his way in. But they are an eloquent testimony to the Faith of that early age and a graphic proof that their Faith was the same as our own. Our Lord appears so often as the Good Shepherd bearing the lost sheep across His shoulders. The brightly-painted peacock symbolizes the soul of the departed, secure in its belief in immortality: the dove with its sprig of olive tells once again of hope: and the anchor is a "camouflaged" figure of the cross. Moses is shown striking the rock that water may gush forth from it as a reminder of the sacramental waters of baptism. Jonas appears, cast out from the whale or Lazarus emerges from the sepulchre to recall the Resurrection of our Lord and the ascent with Him to heaven of the harassed Christians. "The *ave atque vale* of the poet's hopeless woe" is transformed into such inscriptions as these: "Atticus, thy spirit is in bliss": "Sabbatius, sweet soul, pray and intercede for thy brethren and comrades": "Pray for us because we know that thou art with Christ." The Holy Eucharist, their central theme, is portrayed in many ways: in the scene of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes as in that of the marriage feast at Cana. For at that feast water was changed into wine, a symbol of the wine that is transubstantiated into the Blood of Christ. One of the commonest images under which our Lord is seen is that of the fish. The Greek word for fish (for the language of the early Christian was Greek rather than Latin) contains five letters and these were interpreted as the initial letters of the following phrase: Jesus . . . Christ . . . of God . . . Son Saviour. Now this symbol was applied particularly to the Eucharist. Sometimes a tripod is depicted with a small round loaf and a fish on it while a figure, representing a priest or the Church, stands at one side with arm outstretched. Or it may be a banquet scene that is shown: a number of persons are seated behind a long table on which are set loaves and fishes; there may be extra baskets of bread under the table. In the crypt of Lucina

just off the Appian Way is a second-century fresco, one of the very earliest in the catacombs. It shows two fish, green in colour, against a light-earthy background (the tints are excellently preserved): on their backs are carried baskets with small loaves in the upper part, and a glass of red wine is placed in the centre of the baskets. The bread and wine . . . these are the two elements of consecration: after that consecration they are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, here represented as the "fish" that carries them. A clear witness indeed to the belief of the earliest Christians in the Blessed Sacrament.

Pagan and Christian Rome . . . once again in contrast. There the proud funeral monuments with stone and marble flashing in the noonday sun: here the plain recess, the slab inscription underground in the dark earth. There the sense of past achievement now frustrated as the spirit passes "*indignata sub umbras*"; here the cool hope of God's kingdom to come. There the gathered violets and the libation poured upon the tomb: here the Eucharist which was to them, in the phrase of the martyr Ignatius, the magic elixir of immortal life.

VIII

THIEVES' MARKET

This is not, of course, its proper name but only what it is popularly called and, I fear, popularly supposed to be. It is rumoured that, should you "lose" your watch, you can buy it back quite reasonably on the next market day. These are two a week, I fancy, and Sunday is one of them, for then the *Campo dei Fiori* (that is its real title) is covered with stalls of every conceivable kind. Red, blue and yellow scarves and shawls contrast with heaped up gold and purple fruit: there are books and boots, pots, pans and pails, laces and soaps and scents: everywhere chatter and noise and bargaining with unfailing good humour and politeness salted with ready Southern wit. Here—a swarthy face and curling mustachios that would do credit to an operatic villain, there—oval features such as Raphael might have painted for a Madonna. The sun beats down upon the square: the children flock around the vendors of *gelati*: the operatic villain dozes unvillainlike by his unattended booth: and the noonday gun from St. Angelo warns the marketeers that it is already time to disperse and go home to *polenta* and the *riposo* of a summer afternoon.

In the centre of the Campo is a bronze statue of Giordano Bruno, erected by the Freemasons in 1889 as a gesture of defiance hurled at the Holy See. For it was here that this turbulent friar suffered death, after condemnation by the Church in 1600. A strange, erratic character, who maintained that Christ was a magician and the Holy Spirit nothing but the soul inhabiting the universe, half-pantheist and naturalist, he could not reconcile what he had taken

over from the learning of the Renaissance with what he had been taught by Faith. In the course of his wanderings he met Queen Elizabeth and was befriended by Sir Philip Sidney, to whom he dedicated one of his works against the *bestia trionfante*, that was to say the Church of Rome. He had desired to lecture at Oxford but, when permission to do this was refused him, he wrote in a later volume that the dons of that University were better acquainted with beer than with Greek. But it was not because of a contempt for professors but on account of his hatred of the Church that he was glorified by the Freemasons of the *ottocento*, and statues were erected in his honour, one here on the scene of his execution, another facing the Church of St. John Lateran. They little thought when, with mock ritual and satanic banners, they inaugurated the first of these monuments that the place of its erection would come to be known as the market of the thieves.

Not far away, after you turn by the imposing Farnese Palace, is a building with a long and heroic record, particularly dear to English Catholics. For it is the English College, founded in Elizabethan times on the site of a former hospice for pilgrims from this country. The names of Father Persons and of Cardinal Allen are intimately associated with its development: and its long record of martyrs is the glory both of the College and the English Church. Its students, though they dress in modest black, have by far the nicest clerical hat in Rome and—though here I must confess to prejudice—are ranked among the most respected students in the city. They have, besides (the prerogative of Albion transplanted south), a small swimming bath in a *cortile* of the College. Needless to say, their proximity to Bruno and the *mercato dei ladroni* is the merest accident of topography.

J.M.

XANTEN, CITY OF SAINTS.

XANTEN is one of those wonderful old German towns situated rather "off the map," touristically speaking; consequently, it is little known to English lovers of ancient beauty. It lies in the great plain through which the Rhine flows, more broadly and leisurely as it loses its romance and approaches its commonplace, commercial end under a foreign name in an alien land. Gone are the ruin-capped mountains and vine-clad slopes that to thousands of English people mean the Rhine of legend and song. Driving along the old Roman road lined with poplar sentinels, you can almost catch the tang of the sea, whilst the number of windmills reminds you with something of a shock of the nearness of the Low Countries. The land is comparatively flat, with here and there a hill formed by centuries of alluvial deposit, and when I

passed through it, cornfields yellow with their harvest mingled with lush green meadows, in which black and white cows munched in idyllic peace and contentment. An open land, with wide, dim horizons, though under a grey sky, touched with a kind of gentle melancholy; a fitting setting, I thought, for the majestic old Rhine flowing serenely through this last wide stretch of German land to merge its identity with the sea. It seemed strange to think of anything so radiant as Jung-Siegfried being born of that peaceful earth beneath that drear grey sky. More easily you could visualize it all as the scene of that tremendous hecatomb that gave the old Roman city its present name. It was most probably in the old Roman amphitheatre outside the city that St. Victor and 330 men of the famous Theban Legion bore witness to the Faith with their lives, their martyrdom, as that of St. Gereon and his legionaries at Cologne, Cassius and Florentius at Bonn, and Tyrus and Boniface at Trèves, being part of the organized massacre of an entire Christian legion by the order of the Emperor Maximilian in 286 A.D. Thanks to the pious offices of the Empress Helena, many of the bodies of the martyrs were recovered and received Christian sepulture in a sanctuary specially built to receive their hallowed relics. St. Victor's cathedral is the sixth church to have been erected on the original site, all its predecessors, like so many ancient basilicas, having fallen a prey either to the flames or the hostile inroads of barbarian hordes.

The origin of the old city is, in itself, quite a romantic story. The Roman settlement that rose on the hill beyond the present Cleve Gate was called Trajana after the Emperor Trajan. From this it was but a step to Troja, by which name the city appears to have been generally known, until its inhabitants, won over to the Christian Faith, christened it "*ad sanctos*" in honour of those who had laid down their lives for their Lord. The Latin designation later took the German form Sancten or Xanten. A medieval poet still refers to the "city of Troy, now called Xanten," for the old name had, in the course of time, been twisted into a compliment paid by the Romans to their Teutonic adversaries for making their conquest of the country almost as long and as arduous a business as the siege of Troy. Another old legend which, needless to say, enjoyed great popularity, sang the praises of a certain Franco, the first Frankish king of "Little Troy," who was reputed to be in the direct line of descent from a Trojan hero who, with some of his compatriots, had migrated to the Rhine after the fall of Ilion, and had there founded a second Troy. The Teutonic urge for self-apotheosis seems to have been just as rampant even in those primitive days, consequently it does seem quite feasible that to the more belligerent elements of those warlike old tribes—a Victor who voluntarily laid down his arms being simply unthinkable—the Saint, by the natural process of Germanic evolution, became

transformed into the golden, invincible Siegfried who, in his turn, was conquered by death, but death at a traitor's hand.

Watching the massive twin towers of the *Dom* looming ever larger on the wide horizon, I thought how symbolic they were of Xanten's real significance in the chequered saga of the great German people. For St. Victor's stands for a Faith that has ever prevailed through blood and tears; in a word, as its very name implies, for final triumph. Knowing something of German thoroughness, I do not doubt, even though I have never read them, that quite a number of erudite treatises have appeared commenting on the curious fact that the names Victor and Siegfried mean much the same thing. With those two four-square Rhenish towers firmly outlined against the brooding sky, the coincidence occurred to me, too; as also that the glib explanation of Christian cults invariably evolving from heathen superstitions, in this instance simply would not do. For Victor and his legionaries died some nine hundred years before the "Nibelungenlied" was ever thought of, and the old city had been Xanten long before it first became associated with the *beau ideal* of the Nordic race. Thus, by a reversal of the evolutionary process beloved of the materialistically-minded, it would seem demonstrable that, for once in a way, a pagan hero had his origin in the story of a Christian saint.

In any case, there is plenty at Xanten to remind you of Victor, but beyond a highly-legendary *Burg*, a street, and a playing-field, together with an occasional picture post card depicting a blond young man with bulging muscles engaged in slaying a dragon, nothing to testify to Siegfried. Which is hardly surprising, seeing that there never was "no such person."

Above the choir-stalls in the *Dom* are ranged the glass caskets containing the bones of the three hundred and thirty martyrs of the Theban Legion who were the companions of St. Victor, the twelfth-century shrine of the Saint himself being incorporated in the high altar. But the history and architectural features of the great cathedral may be gleaned from any guide-book. The purpose of this paper is rather to convey something of the impression it all makes upon the Catholic from another land, viewing it more or less with an open mind. To me, who was seeing St. Victor's for the first time, the beauty of its essentials seemed somewhat blurred by a plethora of incidentals, for its five naves are crowded with no less than twenty-two altars.

But it is precisely this *embarras de richesse* that interests the English visitor, for many of these altars represent a vital aspect of medieval Catholic life that has long vanished from our own churches. They were foundations of the old guilds and corporations and bear eloquent testimony, as much to their wealth and standing, as to their devout intentions.

Those who, in the correspondence columns of our daily press,

occasionally revive what seems to be by no means a dead and vanished interest in patron saints and their various attributes, would be able to make some interesting additions to their lists at Xanten and Kalkar. Interesting to me was the fact that, at Kalkar, which is but a few kilometres distant from Xanten, many of the guilds appeared to have different patrons. In the following list those I have given in brackets are the Kalkar alternatives: linen weavers: St. Quirinus (St. Severus); shoemakers: St. Clement (SS. Crispin and Crispinian); tailors: St. Helena (St. Anne); carpenters: St. Martin (St. Joseph); drapers: St. Barbara (St. Katharine); bakers, brewers, and tapsters: St. Anthony (St. Stephen); butchers: St. Anne; sailors: St. Nicholas; hatmakers: St. James.

To the lover of ecclesiastical art who has visited Xanten, the name of Heinrich Douvermann, from being the subject of an occasional paragraph or so in art histories, becomes a living memory, evoking a vision of haunting mystic beauty for many a quiet hour.

In the fifteenth century, the proficiency of Flemish wood-carvers had created an unprecedented demand for those wooden altars crowded with tiny figures, in which the virtuosity of the artist is usually so amazing that the bewildered beholder can hardly see the wood for the trees. Such altar-pieces, most of them bearing the black-hand brand of the St. Luke's Guild of Antwerp, found a ready market in the northern countries and in the prosperous merchant cities of the Lower Rhine. In course of time, as is usual in such cases, an exceedingly high standard of technical achievement gradually degenerated into mere routine work, if not into stereotyped repetition. The wealthy guilds of Kalkar, in those days a member of the Hanseatic League, had both the money and the discrimination to prefer artistry to mass output, and they beautified their fine old Nikolai church with no less than seventeen altars, chief among which are the high altar of Master Loedewich, with its 208 carved figures, the Lady Altar of Master Arnt, and, loveliest of all, the Altar of the Seven Dolours of Master Heinrich Douvermann. This latter masterpiece was completed in 1521, and evidently aroused both the admiration and emulation of the Canons of Xanten cathedral, for they immediately placed an order with the Master for a similar altar, to embody the main incidents of the life of our Lady, which work was completed by Douvermann, with the assistance of his son, in 1535.

Little appears to be known of this remarkable man, who in his day must have been an artist with a purely local reputation, since the whole of his output is to be found in the churches of Kalkar, Xanten and Cleve, all of which can be visited with ease in the space of a single day. The scenes from Mary's life that occupy the centre of the altar-piece are interesting, for they show that, despite the prevailing vogue for Flemish art, the artist was original

and independent enough to handle his subjects in an individual manner. But perhaps because these scenes have become more or less familiar to us through the work of other artists, the eye involuntarily seeks and is at once absorbed by something that is wholly different, the great Tree of Jesse embodied in the predella. Behind a veritable enchanted forest of twining branches, leaves, flowers, and fruit, the figure of Jesse may be dimly discerned, enthroned, head on hand, in an attitude of sleep, flanked on the one side behind the same screen of densely interwoven branches by the figure of Solomon, and on the other by that of David with his harp, both attired in the costumes of the artist's own day. From either end of the predella, the tortuous stems and tendrils, bearing here and there amongst their fading blossoms the tiny figures of prophets and kings, strain upwards to form a framework for the whole structure of the altar, finally resolving themselves in a slender, airy pinnacle of single branches of infinite delicacy and grace which form a pedestal for the Mother and her Child.

You stand before Douvermann's masterpiece, and that other Tree of Jesse of his in the church at Kalkar, and are carried back to an age when art was a slow and leisurely growth, as patient a striving after perfection and supreme achievement as the gradual unfolding of the branches of that enchanted forest, fashioned by the old master from wood, that, in its turn, had been saturated for years in the waters of the Rhine to season it and enable it to withstand the ravages of time. To me, there was something of the mystery, the gentle melancholy of the Rhenish scene through which I had passed that day, in those twilit epic figures, in their attitudes of lassitude, longing, and expectancy, faintly glimpsed through that exquisite tangle of delicate sinuous branches, by which the artist had sought to symbolize the wanderings of Israel and the darkness of the world before the coming of the Lord. It is timeless art such as this that is inspired by the same belief to which Victor and his companions had witnessed with their blood: namely, that only man's highest gift is good enough for God.

E. CODD.

Lines from an Autograph Album

As a horse when he's brought to a rivulet's brink
 May prove quite unwilling, tho' able to drink,
 So a poetlet, faced with a bottle of ink,
 May be powerless, tho' ever so eager, to think.

A.R.

II. OUR CONTEMPORARIES

- AMERICA: Aug. 13, 1938. **Candid Camera View of the Alleged Spanish War**, by Arthur Koenig. [An amusing "reductio ad absurdum" of Press reports favourable to the Spanish "Republicans."]
- BLACKFRIARS: Aug., 1938. **Christian Humanism**, by Father Thomas Deman, O.P. [A valuable study of the points of contact and contrast between humanistic ethics and the Christian view of life.]
- CIVILTÀ CATTOLICA: Aug. 6, 1938. **Gli Elementi costitutivi della Nazione e la Razza**, by Father A. Messineo, S.J. [A timely and yet scientific study of the ideas of nation and race, which are so often referred to and invoked to-day.]
- DUBLIN REVIEW: July, 1938. **Christianity, Peace and War**, by Michael de la Bédoyère. [A timely examination of some books, both Catholic and non-Catholic, on the problem of peace and war.]
- ÉTUDES: July 20, 1938. **Le Portugal d'Aujourd'hui**, by Charles Chesnelong. [A full explanation of what Salazar has achieved in Portugal, with an analysis of his reforms.]: Aug. 5—20, 1938. **Tchécoslovaquie, Garante de Paix**, by Pierre Mesnard. [A thorough discussion of the position and problems of this post-war State, concluding in favour of the "status quo" and possibly minimizing the grievances of various minorities.]
- IRISH ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD: Aug., 1938. **The Message of the Social Encyclicals**, by Father Cornelius Lucey. [An excellent introduction to the great Papal Encyclicals with some pertinent remarks upon the Catholic attitude towards social questions.]
- REVUE APOLOGÉTIQUE: July, 1938. **Le Troisième Centenaire du Vœu de Louis XIII**, by A. Molien. [A valuable description of the circumstances which led to the consecration of France to the Blessed Virgin by the vow of Louis XIII at Abbeville in 1638.]
- SIGN: Aug., 1938. **The Tragedy of Christian Politics**, by Christopher Dawson. [Some warning and yet helpful words concerning the mission of the Church and the role of the individual Christian in the modern world.]
- TABLET: July 23 and 30, Aug. 6, 1938. **The Present Political Crisis in the United States**, by Douglas Jerrold. [A most useful study, at first hand, of recent developments within the United States.]
- UNIVERSE: Aug. 12, 1938. **Irreligion is the Opium of the Feeble**, by Arnold Lunn. [Some vigorous speech in defence of Christian restraint, against which a tired and enfeebled civilization chafes.]

REVIEWS

I—THE THINGS THAT ARE NOT CÆSAR'S¹

IN a readable and well-documented book Dr. Duncan-Jones tells the story of another attempt by Cæsar to lay hands upon what is not and never can be his. The claim made on behalf of the German Government that their measures against the Protestant and Catholic Churches are prompted solely by the desire to bring about union among the former and to curb political activity within the latter, is not considered seriously outside that country. There is interference with religious education, and in many cases the effort to give a positively anti-Christian formation: association for purposes connected with religion is made more difficult: all the artifices of propaganda have been employed to discredit the Christian faith and its ministers. To what extent such interference is due to the determination to subject every branch of the national life to Totalitarian control, and what part is played by the confused and semi-mystical attachment to notions of Race and Folk and Blood, is not so clear. The logical outcome of the latter would be a National non-Christian Church, actually proposed by groups of neo-pagans and not entirely foreign to the minds of some of the German Christians.

The book deals first with the Nazi attitude towards the Protestant Churches. These were organized in twenty-eight local Churches and contained both Lutherans and Calvinists. The author admits that rationalism and the too close association of Church and State during the nineteenth century had weakened German Protestantism before the war: the clergy were State officials, "the fire of religion burnt low." The Nazi intention was to unite these various Churches in one national organization which should be more amenable to State control. In this they were supported by the so-called German Christians, a body founded in 1930 to reconcile National Socialism with Christianity and which recognized the former as "a call from God for the renewing of the Church as a true fellowship of faith for the German people." Ludwig Müller, former army and navy chaplain, was appointed *Reichsbischof* and the *Führerprinzip* was thus introduced into the Protestant Church. One of his first actions was to sanction the incorporation of the Evangelical Youth Movements in the Hitler Youth. His attempt to unify and control the Churches met with partial success but aroused violent opposition. Eventually he was

¹ *The Struggle for Religious Freedom in Germany.* By A. S. Duncan-Jones, Dean of Chichester. London: Gollancz. Pp. 320. Price, 8s. 6d.

sacrificed but only to make way for Dr. Kerri, whose policy is similar but has been more ruthlessly applied. The Protestants are now divided into the German Christians, ready for compromise and accommodation, some of whom have accepted notions that are incompatible with Christian belief, and the members of the Confessional Church. It is the latter who, in the author's words, are struggling for religious freedom and have resisted, steadfastly and at times heroically, the attacks of Party and State upon their principles and conscience.

Two weeks ago an Anglican periodical asserted that "recent utterances of the Pope on the subject of racialism indicate a stiffening of the Church's opposition to the myth of blood and soil and to the spirit of anti-Christ begotten of that myth." Are we to conclude that Catholics were ever tolerant of that particular heresy? Dr. Duncan-Jones appears to entertain the same notion when he suggests that the Holy Father's dislike of Communism pre-disposed him at first to sympathize with any and every anti-Communist movement. With this and a few other statements in the book we would quarrel. But on the whole, the author treats of the Catholic question in Germany with fairness and sympathy. The various devices used to drive a wedge between clergy and people and then between the higher and lower clergy, the currency and immorality trials, are seen in their proper perspective as so many attempts to discredit the Church and to pillory her as something foreign to the German nature. He is full of admiration for the courage of Cardinal Faulhaber and other Bishops, and notes with evident satisfaction a spirit of *rapprochement* between Catholics and Protestants in the face of a common danger. The emphasis he places upon the utterances of the Holy Father and in particular upon the Encyclical "Mit Brennender Sorge" leaves us with the impression that he recognizes that the real defence of Christianity in Germany rests with the Catholic Church. Lutheranism was a first "protest" against Catholicism: that first protest is now in danger of being swept away by a second protest of a more radical kind. That Church alone will remain, against which protest has so often and, in the last resort, so unavailingly been made.

The book merits high commendation. It is clear and well-written: its tone is restrained, its whole manner objective. Both for those who have followed the recent trend of events in Germany and for those who have not, the work is informative and illuminating.

J.M.

2—THE FOURTH GOSPEL¹

DR. ROBERT EISLER has given the above title to his new book. The reader is warned in this way that the question of authorship is considered never to have received in the past any satisfactory solution. Dr. Eisler admits that St. John the Apostle was held to be the author by St. Jerome, St. Augustine, St. Epiphanius, Eusebius, St. Dionysius of Alexandria and Origen. But the authority of these Fathers and other early witnesses of Christian tradition weighs little in the balance of his judgment. Neither does he admit any of the other numerous "Johns" who have been placed in "the empty niche" by various modern writers. In place of them all Dr. Eisler has now discovered the author to have been a "John" more or less familiar to us all by name, but hitherto unsuspected by anyone at all of the paternity of the Fourth Gospel. This is the "John" of the high-priestly kin who sat in judgment with Annas, Caiaphas and others on Saints Peter and John the Apostle, according to the account of Acts iv, 6. It is astonishing what a complete life-history of this John is pieced together by ingenious processes of conjectural, and even inventive, reconstruction. But the basis of the whole story is the celebrated passage in the Epistle of Polycrates of Ephesus to Pope Victor. In this document John of Ephesus is described as a priest or pontiff (*hiereus*) who had worn the frontlet. Dr. Eisler has persuaded himself that such a description could be given to none but a former High Priest of the Temple at Jerusalem. He overlooks the fact that our Lord is called *archiereus*, or High Priest, in the New Testament and frequently in the Fathers, and that the term "*hiereus*" is used of the Christian priesthood by Origen not so long after the time of Polycrates. One understands that Polycrates was unwilling to apply to an Apostle the term used of our Lord Himself in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and therefore used a periphrasis.

Another weak point in Dr. Eisler's case is that the author of the Fourth Gospel was obviously an eye-witness of our Lord's Ministry. But according to the new solution of the "enigma" John of the high-priestly kin was the little lad our Lord took in His embrace when He gave the Apostles a well-merited lesson in humility. But as a son of the High Priest Annas, he was not allowed to evade parental control for long, and remained only a short while in the company of the Divine Master. Dr. Eisler meets this difficulty with the theory that the Beloved Disciple was Lazarus, and that his memoirs were utilized by John of the high-priestly stock in the composition of his Gospel. But here our author has failed to notice a piece of evidence fatal to his con-

¹ *The Enigma of the Fourth Gospel*. By Robert Eisler. London: Methuen. Pp. xxii, 224. Price, 12s. 6d. n.

tention. Lazarus was not present at the Last Supper and the Beloved Disciple most certainly was. It is fairly clear from the Fourth Gospel that only the Apostles were present, and the three Synoptic Gospels are unanimous and explicit on the point.

It is hardly necessary to say that Dr. Eisler is a supporter of the supposed early martyrdom of St. John the Apostle. He relies on texts in the martyrologies where the title of Martyr is given to the Apostle, and on dubious quotations from Papias in Philippus Sidetes and Georgios Hamartolos. The word Martyr, of course, means a witness, and in the early Church was by no means confined to those who laid down their lives for the Faith. According to early usage St. John merited the title of Martyr by his sufferings in exile at Patmos. The supposed testimony of Papias to an early martyrdom of the Saint under Herod Agrippa not only conflicts with the well-established tradition that John lived on at Ephesus to an advanced age, but is shown to be erroneous by the silence of Eusebius. This historian possessed and studied the famous lost work of Papias, and it was his professed purpose to record whatever he found in earlier writings that was of importance in connexion with the canonical Scriptures. Had there been in Papias's writings any statement about an early martyrdom of St. John the Apostle, Eusebius would not have failed to refer to it. The statement, if it did occur in Papias, must have concerned the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist or of St. James, both of whom were put to death by members of the Herodian family and therefore, in a legitimate usage of the word, by the Jews.

3—FURTHER SCRIPTURE STUDY¹

OTHERS besides students of the Bible will be grateful to Father Hugh Pope for this revised, or rather rewritten, third volume of his "Aids." Anyone who has tried to keep in touch with the results of recent archæological research knows what a bewildering task it is. The books that are written, still more the various publications which record new discoveries, make it almost impossible for any but the most rigorous specialist to follow them all. Father Pope is fully aware of this difficulty and at the same time understands how important such knowledge is for Old Testament study, corroborating, as it does, the evidence of the Bible at almost every point. He has therefore prefaced this volume with a study, both of the history of archæological research in the Near East, and of the conclusions that have been drawn from it. He warns students to be cautious in the use of these conclusions; and

¹ *The Catholic Student's "Aids" to the Study of the Bible.* By Father Hugh Pope, O.P. Vol. III. Second Edition, fully revised. London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne. Pp. xvi, 424. Price, 10s. 6d.

not the least valuable of his lessons are those which tell us what we cannot yet say,—in contrast with authors who are only too eager to give oracular decisions. This latter tendency is still very noticeable among English scientists, both evolutionists and ancient historians; it is less evident abroad.

But this is only a side issue. By far the most important lesson for the Bible student is that which Father Pope seems to have most in mind, *i.e.*, the place of the children of Israel, from first to last, in relation to the surrounding nations. This has been the chief discovery of recent research. Father Pope accordingly devotes many pages to an account not only of ancient Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, Phœnicia, Idumæa, etc., but of points of contact between these countries and the Israelites, which monuments have disclosed. For the purpose of such a study it was obvious that references would have to be multiplied; the care with which Father Pope has given these, sentence by sentence, is beyond reproach.

The rest of this new edition covers more or less familiar ground. The author touches very lightly on the delicate question of Biblical Chronology; it is not improbable that, in the light of archæological research, scholars will be able to speak more certainly about it at no distant time. The question of the Religious History of Israel which follows, is treated negatively rather than positively; Father Pope, no doubt, would have the reader bear in mind what he has said elsewhere. So, too, when he comes to discuss, at some length, the Problem of the Pentateuch. In that section, while giving a brief history of the problem from the time of Origen, he is, of course, chiefly concerned with Welhausen in the first place, and then with the evolutionists. But we are glad to see that he has stressed the fact that the once formidable combination of E and J and P is being loosened by the new discoveries; loosened, he reminds us, but not dissolved. Have we come perhaps to a time when some reconciliation might be possible between what is good in the Higher Criticism and the old tradition? This, we feel sure is at the back of Father Pope's mind; it may, perhaps, be taken as the lesson of his painstaking and learned book.

✠ A.G.

4—ASCETICAL AND MYSTICAL THEOLOGY¹

THEOLOGICAL lectures supplementary to the main course suffer from the twofold drawback of being wide in scope and limited in number. It is therefore something of a feat to compress within a limited compass a treatment of the subject which shall be at once complete and clear. This feat His Grace

¹ *Introduction to Ascetical and Mystical Theology.* By Archbishop Goodier, S.J. London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne. Pp. 209. Price, 7s. 6d.

Archbishop Goodier has admirably accomplished. For the division of his matter he acknowledges a debt to the classic work of Tanqueray; but the treatment is entirely his own and is marked by an economy of language which enables him to be brief without ever becoming arid. In fact, as was to be expected, within its prescribed limits and for its purpose, the book is masterly.

Especially will many be grateful for the renewed vindication of the part played by the mind in prayer and for the contention that the distinction between "higher" and "lower" kinds of prayer is to be deprecated. Nor has there appeared in English a saner treatment of mysticism than is embodied in the two final lectures of the book.

One may, however, be permitted to regret the brevity of the passage on p. 106 which deals with vocation. It is indeed carefully and accurately worded; nevertheless there is danger lest it be misapprehended by less accurately-minded readers. For there is at present a tendency to belittle the religious vocation, and the argument that perfection in the world may well be a higher call, is calculated to appeal only too forcibly to hesitating souls.

The only other fault to be found with this book is that it is too short. In his preface, the learned author pleads that for those who wish to pursue the subject further, there are already books in plenty. That may be so; but few, if any of them, treat the subject with such vigour, clarity and moderation. Is it too much to hope that these qualities may be again applied to a more developed treatment in a second volume?

F.M.

5—SPAIN OF THE SPANIARDS¹

THIS book may well be recommended as an antidote to the prevalent tendency to interpret the present struggle in Spain in terms of movements, ideologies and ways of thought which are definitely not Spanish. It is perhaps inevitable that such should be the treatment accorded to that country, for ever since the seventeenth century Spain has figured as a victim of the mutual rivalries and ambitions of other States; yet, paradoxical though it may appear, a thoughtful observer might be justified in arguing that out of the very violence of the present struggle, and on the ruins of over-bold attempts at national and international intervention, the true Spain of the Spaniards may yet emerge to take up the genuine Spanish story of the days of Charles V and Philip II. Whether this is to be realized or not, it is high time for the essential difference between Spanish and non-Spanish peoples to be made as clear and plain as possible. This service to Spain and

¹ *Spain of the Spaniards*. By Bernard Wall. London: Sheed & Ward. Pp. 109. Price, 5s. net.

to all who would honestly endeavour to see the purely national issues at stake to-day, is admirably rendered by Mr. Wall in this little book.

Some might call it a book of travel, but it is far more than that. It is a study of the Spanish temperament as noted by an intelligent observer in typical Spanish towns, villages, country districts, on the roads and railways, in the hospitals, camps, churches and casinos. Everything that is peculiar to the people in their practices, ideas and outlook, their aims and general philosophy, is recorded with meticulous thoroughness. Observation merges of course into interpretation, but even the most blind devotee of one or other European ideology has to admit that the interpretation is honest. The general impression must, one feels, be highly discouraging to the apostles of Fascism, Communism and Democracy alike. How can the emissary of any such camp hope to enlist under his banner a people, frankly and genuinely contemptuous of money? How can forces armed for the triumph of some alien ideal, hope to conquer men who march to battle crying "Long live Death"? Spain is Spanish, and Spaniards are Spanish! Mr. Wall in these excellent pages makes even the uninitiated realize something of what that means. He does so, moreover, in a style so pleasant that it would enliven a far duller subject.

J.S.

6—FRANCISCO FRANCO¹

THE author of this book has achieved the rather unusual task of writing a genuinely interesting account of a man's career previous to his appearance on the stage of History. The standard Life of General Franco will certainly be written in years to come, when his work has been completed and can be viewed in correct perspective, but it may be doubted if the opening chapters of such a Life will be as arresting, colourful or as well documented as in the work of Señor Joaquín Arrarás. This book is essentially an introduction to a personality. Though the writer evidently has definite political views, he makes no digressions into the rights and wrongs of the present struggle in Spain, being concerned solely with the task of acquainting the reader with the character and career of his hero. He shows us the Captain at the age of twenty, the General at thirty-two, the maker of Spain's Foreign Legion, the Commandant of the Spanish Sandhurst, a semi-exile in the Canaries, and finally the deliverer of his country. The reader is made to feel throughout that he is face to face with a man who is indeed every inch a soldier, and yet as different from the narrow martinet of Potsdam repute, as saint from sinner. The portrait

¹ *Francisco Franco*. By Joaquín Arrarás. London: Geoffrey Bles. Pp. 223. Price, 7s. 6d. net.

is that of a perfect gentleman—graceful, chivalrous, generous, reminiscent of the lofty ideal of medieval knighthood—and yet of a soldier whose abilities, while he was still the youngest General in Europe, could win the enthusiastic admiration of a Maginot and command the respectful attention of the strategists of all Europe assembled in 1930 at Versailles. This dual note is not the creation of an enthusiastic biographer: it is convincingly brought out by the detailed story of the man who a short time ago figured as the chief instrument in the crushing of the Moors in Spanish Morocco, and to-day commands the almost fanatical devotion of his former enemies. Perhaps the chief merit of the book is that it succeeds in bringing out this dualism. A real note of optimism is struck. The reader, no matter what his political views, may well feel convinced that in General Franco the two Spains have common hope for a harmonious future.

J.S.

"THE MONTH" FORWARDING SCHEME

IMPORTANT NOTICE. So much unintentional confusion has been caused, both in the Missions and at headquarters, by missionaries, when moved, "taking their MONTH with them," that we earnestly appeal to all not to do this, *but to notify us immediately* of their change of address, when a *new* MONTH will be allotted to them. The first charge on our "stamp-trade" is to see that they are supplied even if a new forwarder is not at once available.

STAMPS. To both known and anonymous donors of foreign stamps, we repeat our most sincere thanks, for they thus help to provide direct subscriptions for far-distant outposts and, as above mentioned, prevent a missionary who has to leave his old station from losing his MONTH—by providing a new one.

NEW POSTAGE RATES. As a new air service at slightly higher rates is now exclusively employed for India and parts of Africa, it may be that certain recent letters of ours were inadvertently understamped, and if so, we express our deep regret.

Readers who are willing to forward their "Month" to a missionary or to provide an annual subscription (14s.) for one to be sent direct to the more distant outposts are asked to communicate with The Hon. Secretary, "The Month" Forwarding Scheme, 31 Farm Street, Berkeley Square, London, W.1. Readers *must* enclose a stamped addressed envelope, and all names and addresses, whether of missionaries applying for "The Month," or readers providing it, *should be printed in capitals.*

FOREIGN STAMPS, particularly from British Colonies, are collected by the Secretary and sold for the work of the Forwarding Scheme. These should be cut off leaving roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ in. margin. If edges or backs are damaged they are useless.

SHORT NOTICES

CANON LAW.

THE *Compendium Juris Canonici*, by Father M. Conte a Coronata, O.M.C. (Marietti: 2 vols. 35.00 l. each), has been produced in the best possible manner, by reduction from a larger work in five volumes, which were reviewed in these pages, as they appeared from 1928 to 1935. Condensation and omission have given us a compendium which is of real value to the student and to anyone who needs a rapid and yet comprehensive survey of a point of law. The number of supplements to the New Code is now considerable: and most of them are allowed their due space in this summary. There is, however, no discussion of the important decisions regarding Canon 2388 which were made known in April, 1936, and May, 1937. The two volumes cover the whole field of Canon Law except for the legislation on the Sacraments which is rightly left to the care of the moral theologian.

Under the Roman Empire the interpretation of the Jurists was for a long period considered to be a more important source of Law than legislation itself. The historian of Church Law may well inquire how far this use of the *responsa prudentum* has had its counterpart in the development of the Canons. The monograph of Professor Orio Giacchi, *La Dottrina della Interpretazione autentica nel Diritto Canonico* ("Vita e Pensiero": 5.00 l.), introduces this subject and deals with the notion of "authentic interpretation," contained in Canon 17 of the present Code. His conclusion is that the influence of the theologians is more marked than that of the jurists and that, among the theologians, Suarez is the most important. Indeed it is to Suarez's work of clarification and innovation that a large part of the monograph is dedicated. That the subject is not without its actual bearing on fundamental questions is evident from its connexion with the theory of Probabilism, and with the famous "*lex dubia non obligat*" of the moralists.

PHILOSOPHICAL.

The truth that philosophy is the critic of the sciences is well exemplified by M. Perier's study of evolution, entitled *Le Trans-formisme* (Beauchesne: 30.00 fr.), in which the author examines the conclusions of the scientists concerning the origin of species in general and of man's body in particular, from the point of view of a Catholic thinker. His purpose is primarily apologetic, namely, to do away with that incubus of materialistic pseudo-philosophy which still weighs heavily, in France as elsewhere, upon the "*gens de culture moyenne*." It is through widespread acceptance of this mechanistic evolution that many have come to ignore the fact of God's dominion over the human body: and it may even be sug-

gested that modern race-theories are based upon the assumption that the nobler and more Nordic stocks have evolved further than their Semitic fellows from an original status in the brute. M. Perier is more concerned with the general theory than with observed facts concerning fossils and chromosomes. He is, however, well versed in his facts, as also in the teaching of theologians on the origin of the human soul. There are passages where the expert might disagree with him or at least wish for further explanation, as, for example, in his derivation of the Principle of Causality by simple analysis from that of Sufficient Reason (p. 108). But such possible queries do not mar the usefulness of the book for the general reader. It is to be regretted that the author's untimely death has not allowed him to continue this very fruitful labour.

HOMILETIC.

The essentially personal manner, so characteristic of Father Martindale, is nowhere more marked than in **Our Blessed Lady: Sermons** (Sheed & Ward: 7s. 6d.). He tells us of shrines which he has visited all over the world; he offers each sermon to some friend, or group of friends, which has the effect, almost, of turning the sermons into conversations. In addition his method of bringing all his guns to bear on any point he is considering, fills the volume with an amazing amount of what may be called "side" information, from the classics, scripture and history, etc.; it reads as if he were seizing this opportunity to lay all his store of accumulated learning at our Lady's feet. The footnotes, again, open out yet wider avenues, as if they would suggest the infinite knowledge that is our Lady's domain.

Dr. Messenger, in **The Sunday Epistles simply explained** (B.O. & W.: 6s.), has written a book which will be of great service to many, both priests and layfolk. The Epistles are seldom easy reading to the uninitiated, and the disconnected passages read in the missal are often made more difficult still, by being taken out of their context. Dr. Messenger has tried in this book to remove both of these obstacles. He has put each passage in its original setting, sometimes adding the historical situation, but chiefly attending to the dogmatic or moral teaching it contains. His wide acquaintance with this side of the Scripture enables him to support one text by another, so that he need rarely, if ever, quote from any other author. Often one is struck by his direct application to modern conditions, as, for instance (p. 107), in the reason he gives for the present day neglect of the Ten Commandments.

DEVOTIONAL.

The success of **Spiritual Reflections for Sisters**, by Father Charles J. Mullaly, S.J. (Apostleship of Prayer, New York: 35 cents), has induced him to produce a second volume on the same lines, containing some twenty-five papers of two pages each on

such subjects as Zeal for Souls, Humility, Human Respect, Gospel, Refinement, etc. Father Mullaly, here as elsewhere, looks at conditions as they are, and then sees what religion can do to improve them.

Friends of St. Thomas More are again indebted to Mgr. Hallett for another little book, **English Prayers and Treatise on the Holy Eucharist by St. Thomas More** (B.O. & W.: 2s.). After his own historical introduction he gives us, first, the famous prayer written in the Denbigh Book of Hours, then the prayer composed after the martyr's condemnation, next St. Thomas's translation of the Prayer of Pico della Mirandola, lastly other prayers, along with the Treatise on the Holy Eucharist, written while he was a prisoner in the Tower. The list of these prayers alone should be enough to recommend this choice little book.

Pentecost is some weeks behind us, but the thought of the Holy Ghost is no mere seasonal affair; every day, and never more than now amid the rush of modern life, do we need the steadying and strengthening touch of the Holy Spirit. This is the theme of Father David P. McAstocker, S.J., in his latest volume, **The Consoler** (Coldwell: 7s. 6d. n.). Despite the sublimity of the subject, Father McAstocker has produced a popular volume, and there is nothing heavy or forbiddingly theological about the book. The language is homely and conversational (occasionally the author betrays his nationality by the characteristic American introduction of archaisms); the ideas are simple and well expressed, and in fourteen intimate "chats" (in the book they are entitled "chapters") the author contrives to convey much solid instruction on the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul, and would have us know the peace and stability which may result therefrom in our lives.

LITURGICAL.

In the second volume of **The Prayers of the Missal** (Sheed & Ward, 2s. 6d.), Father Martindale continues his apostolate of the Mass, this time by considering the Offertory prayers and the Post-communions. Naturally he has experienced more difficulty in this volume than in the previous one on the Collects; nevertheless, his perfect translations and his original and valuable suggestions make the book wholly fresh and new. The whole purpose of the writer is admirably expressed on the last page, where once again he shows the reader what "hearing Mass" really means.

HISTORICAL.

The Catholic who studies history will do well to take note of **The Catholic Philosophy of History**, Vol. III of the *Papers of the American Catholic Historical Association* (Kenedy, New York: \$3.00). The book is a collection of essays by professional historians who are Catholics, on the contribution made by their co-religionists in the past to a philosophy of history. Otto of Freising, Aquinas, Dante, Bossuet and Vico are the subjects of separate

papers; perhaps the most interesting of them is the monograph on Dante by Father G. G. Walsh, S.J. The necessity of admitting the ideas of Providence and the Fall of Man in addition to those of Progress and Free Will in the interpretation of history is clearly evidenced from Dante's work, and is an admirable corrective to the liberal theories of the last century. It is by books of this kind, rather than by lip-service to the splendour and clarity of Catholic principles, that the restoration of Christian philosophy may best be furthered.

The Augustinian historian, the Very Rev. E. A. Foran, O.S.A., has, evidently with great labour and research, collected material for a history of the Hermits of St. Augustine in **The Augustinians from St. Augustine to the Union, 1256** (B.O. & W.: 7s. 6d.). He has written a book which the student of medieval history will welcome, for it develops a subject which often calls for notice in that period, namely, the influence of the Augustinians before St. Benedict, and afterwards till the age of St. Dominic and St. Francis. The author gives us in English the contemporary life of the saint of Hippo by Possidius, and an account of Augustine himself and all his known companions; he describes the fate of the Augustinian monasteries in Africa during the Barbarian and Moorish invasions. Under different headings he relates the spread of the Hermits in Europe, reserving England for a later volume. The list of Augustinian houses, in the latter part of the book, and of the saints they produced, is most impressive, and will be of special value to the historian.

THEOLOGICAL.

In **The Faith in Practice**, by Father Philip Hughes (Longmans: 5s. n.), the author has asked himself the question, what the educated Catholic ought to know about his Faith that he may appreciate and live it. Keeping before himself, chiefly, St. Thomas and the Catechism of the Council of Trent, he has started at the beginning, with God and Creation, Man and Redemption, and the Church; has then proceeded to the New Life of Sanctifying Grace and its maintenance by means of the Sacraments. In all this he covers familiar ground; but he does it with his eye continually on the meaning it has in everyday life. This becomes more and more manifest as he proceeds, and explains and applies the Supernatural Virtues, Faith, Hope, Charity, and the Cardinal Virtues. The last section, on Prayer and Devotion in ordinary life, crowns the whole work, and shows the author's mind to perfection. He understands those to whom he speaks, and while descending to the ordinary level, does not hesitate to point the way to the highest. A very thorough index makes reference easy.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

In **La Percluse Heroïque** (Edition Universelle, Brussels: 12.00 fr.) Paulin Renault narrates the story of Mère Julie Billiart, foundress of the Sisters of Notre Dame. It is told dramatically,

in a series of "shots," with great economy of detail. It is swift and vivid, and the author makes the most of the powerful situations offered by the march of events. He brings out well the long preparation in silence and suffering, the deep roots in French peasant Catholicism out of which flowered this chosen soul, the violence of the Terror, the urgency of the apostolate to which Mère Julie and her daughters were called. It is just a little "stagey"; the figures move like well-drilled actors and say their pieces nicely, speaking with a finished concentration of phrasing and a flourish of syntax that suggest the boards and limelight more than real life. But why should they not? The author has much to compress into his packed pages. It is historical romance rather than hagiography, but it rings true and is very readable.

Among those modern servants of God whose Cause for Beatification has been introduced, is Joseph-Benedict Dusmet, O.S.B., Archbishop of Catania and Cardinal (1818—1894). His *Life*, entitled **A Sicilian Borromeo**, has been written by a Benedictine of Stanbrook Abbey (B.O. & W.: 6s. n.). It is a life of great interest, describing one who combined the strictest sanctity with a great sense of humour, who could face the troubles of the Garibaldian age with a peace of mind that was heroic, who showed how easily the contemplative develops into the apostle. As one reads, one gathers the impression, already given in the portrait at the beginning of the book, of a man whose natural bent was tranquillity of soul, yet who, whenever any occasion of heroic action offered, went out to meet it as if it were the most natural and easy thing to do. Cholera, volcanic eruption, famine—he had to face them all. And he had some of his reward, even in this world; for few have won more esteem and affection, from both Church and people.

Father Leonard Feeney, S.J., has lately issued his first biographical study, **An American Woman** (America Press: \$2.00). It is the Life of Mother Elizabeth Seton, Foundress of the Sisters of Charity in America; and in the course of a few hundred pages he gives us what he would doubtless call "a new angle" on a new saint—or rather, saint-to-be, if the hopes raised by the recent introduction of her Cause, in Rome, are fulfilled. Both in style and sentiment this little book is liable to prove distasteful to some readers, as when the author discusses what he strangely terms the "blustering behaviour" of St. Mary Magdalene (liturgical version, "gloriosa merita"), in order to throw into relief the peaceful virtues of his heroine; for such, indeed, she was. The contrast, however, is not too convincing, since the "little Elizabeth" herself had her moments of transport and rapture, *e.g.*, on meeting the holy Bishop Cheverus (pp. 230—231), when she "seized his hands" and "bathed them with her tears," unable to speak a word. But, apart from such side-issues, and judging from facts rather than from eulogies which, one imagines, she would have been the first to deprecate, Mother Seton was a woman of deep religious devo-

tion and most heroic character, whose fitting monument is in the many hundred schools, hospitals, orphanages, etc., now flourishing in America, and owing to her their existence, while close on 9,000 Sisters of Charity carry on the work which she began. A wonderful achievement for a short life of forty-six years, only a third of which were passed as a member of the Catholic Church. Still, with all its provocativeness, there is throughout this record something likeable, disarming, and very much alive!

SOCIOLOGICAL.

Yves Simon in his recent *Trois Leçons sur le Travail* (Téqui) provides us with a thoughtful monograph on the points of contact of Aristotelian metaphysics and ethics with social economic theory. These three essays on the essential nature of work (as distinct from contemplation), its specific end (the production of wealth), and its subjective cultural value (art and prudence), are full of interesting and clearly-developed ideas, closely akin to those of Mr. Eric Gill. The judgments on machinery, distributism and the co-ordination of the principles of authority and autonomy (subsidiary function) seem sound, at least speculatively. Perhaps the book as a whole loses by confining itself rigorously to the domain of theory.

LITERARY.

Many Catholic students who have read the normal textbook account of Piers Plowman must have felt that the usual picture of him as an embryonic social reformer and satirist was, at least in part, a misrepresentation. Religious sentiment and teaching inspired his work more obviously than did any social discontent. To develop and substantiate this conviction, however, which was so contrary to the accepted interpretation, involved a labour which very few would undertake. Only a student of literature who was a Catholic and a theologian, could attempt it with reasonable prospect of success. Father Dunning in his *Piers Plowman* (Longmans: 8s. 6d.) has done so with a thoroughness and industry which makes his book worthy of appreciation. In a very detailed analysis of the A-text he emphasizes its moral and didactic character, and collates it with the patristic and traditional teaching of the Church at that time. He interprets the meaning of the two poems in the A-text, almost line by line, in accordance with this teaching, contrasts this text with the B-text and in a final chapter summarizes the results of his analysis. An altogether unusual industry has gone to the making of the book but it remains too obviously a thesis to have a wide appeal. It is a process of dissection with too much head and too little heart to be popular. The very numerous but untranslated Latin and Italian extracts detract from its general usefulness, and the author supports his every other assertion with a quotation, often trivial, from some other writer. But for the student it will prove of real value and

will give him an introduction into the true meaning and outlook of *Piers Plowman*.

Three years ago, in April, 1935, we printed a long and appreciative review of Signor Federico Olivero's detailed study of Francis Thompson. We understand that it was welcomed also by Mr. Wilfrid Meynell as one of the best books, yet written, concerning the poet he helped so much. An English translation has now been published in a limited edition in Turin, with the title **Francis Thompson** (S. Lattes & Co.: 25.00 l.). The work remains what it was; its treatment is sympathetic and reveals a real sense of the religious nature of the poet's thought. There is a close study of Thompson as a writer, with chapters on his theory of poetry and his style, and others on his language and imagery. The author, who has published previous works on Keats and Shelley, on Tennyson, Newman and Thomas Hardy, has an intimate acquaintance with English literature and a keen sense of the niceties of our language. But—and here's the rub—the book was much more impressive in its original Italian. Signor Olivero has been slightly unfortunate in his translator, an Italian lecturer in English at Turin. Indeed, it is no easy matter to wed to the prose and verse of Thompson a commentary that will not sound inadequate and flat. In the present version there are several mistakes: "intended to nothing else but art" (p. 73); "sense for a good form" (p. 147), to give but two examples. At times a too literal rendering makes reading difficult, as in the sentence (p. 201)—"Imposing and luminous pictures of a Miltonian character smile like dazzling corollas, blossoming from a keen and powerful fancy, beside wild tropes." The book is a valuable one; the translation a laudable effort, but it needs further revision.

With a view to meeting the needs of Catholic High School teachers in the U.S.A. Father A. Purcell, S.J. has brought out a little volume on De Quincey which takes the form of an edition of his essay on Joan of Arc and a section of his *Grand Guignol* word-painting, **The English Stage Coach**. The book has been published in an attractive form by Longmans, and there is a good Introduction in which Father Purcell comprises a biographical sketch of De Quincey as well as a discussion of the tragic history of St. Joan. We have also notes on the text, suggestions for teachers, a short bibliography, and other features desirable in a book designed for educational purposes. We do not doubt that in many convent schools for girls this little work will be both popular and helpful.

MINOR PUBLICATIONS.

Among recent pamphlets of the Catholic Truth Society (2d. each) are to be noted **Catholicism in Mexico**, a translation of the Papal Encyclical addressed to the Bishops of that country and offering them advice and encouragement in their difficult situation: **St. Felix and St. Edmund of East Anglia**, which contains a short

history of the Church in the Eastern counties and the missionary labours of St. Felix, its Apostle from Burgundy, as well as the story of the Life and Martyrdom of King Edmund, later venerated as a saint: **Humpy Han and Other Stories**, by Alice Dease, including three charming anecdotes of Chinese boys and girls brought into contact with the Church (the cover has an attractive "willow plate" representation): **Some Religious Questions**, a series of eight most useful Bellarmine Society Leaflets on various religious topics: and lastly a booklet with the title **First Holy Communion For Little Children**, by a nun of the Assumption, excellently prepared, but more suitable because of its "grown-up" language for parents and teachers than for the children themselves.

Three issues of **The Catholic Mind** for July 22nd, August 8th, and August 22nd (5 cents each) contain the usual valuable reprints of chosen articles. Among these may be instanced **Ethics of Bombing and the Spanish War**, by Father Keating, S.J., Editor of **THE MONTH: Portugal's Progress as a Christian State**, by Father Eberle, S.J., originally a radio address: a sermon of Cardinal Faulhaber on **Communists, Nazis and the Catholic Church**; and finally a valuable article on the important and sacramental role of Matrimony and Married Life in the modern world. The original article was by Maria Schlüter-Hermkes, and appeared in the German review *Stimmen der Zeit*.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Reviewed in present issue or reserved for future notice.)

- ALCAN, Paris.
La Psychologie Expérimentale en Italie (Ecole de Milan). By A. Manoil. Pp. viii, 490. Price, 80.00 fr.
- AMERICA PRESS, New York.
Infancy, Hidden Life. By Father F. P. LeBuffe, S.J. Pp. 64. Price, 30 cents.
- BLOUD ET GAY, Paris.
Seul chez les Canaques. By Jean Godefroy. Pp. 216. Price, 18.00 fr.
- COLDWELL, London.
In the Service of God. Translated by Sister Mary Charitas, S.S.N.D. Pp. 190. Price, 6s. 6d. *The World's Classic, Job*. By Father George O'Neill, S.J. Pp. 160. Price, 11s. 6d. *The Priceless Pearl*. By Sister M. Aloysi Kiener, S.N.D. Pp. 80. Price, 2s. 6d. *The Whole Christ*. By Father Emile Mersch, S.J. Translated by Father John R. Kelly, S.J. Pp. 624. Price, 21s. n.
- J. M. DENT, London.
Unholy Trinity. By Eric Gill and Denis Tegetmeier. Pp. 24. Price, 2s. n.
- ÉDITIONS DE LA CLÉ D'OR, Paris.
La Garde Fidèle du Saint-Père. By Gaston Castilla. Pp. 200. Price, 30.00 Swiss francs.
- ÉDITIONS SPES, Paris.
Sur la Route avec le Bon Dieu. By Louis Mendigal. Pp. 192. Price, 10.00 fr.
- HEATH CRANTON, London.
Somerset Folk. By Ethelbert Horne. Pp. 168. Price, 3s. 6d.
- OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, London.
Shakespeare Criticism. By C. Narayana Menon. Pp. 276. Price, 5s. n.
- TÉQUI, Paris.
Manuel d'Études Bibliques. Tome IV. *Les Évangiles*. By the Abbés Lusseau and Collomb. Pp. 916. Price, 50.00 fr.
- UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS PRESS, Manila.
Vitoria and the Conquest of America. By Father Honorio Muñoz, O.P. Pp. 220. Price, \$2.00.
- "VITA E PENSIERO," Milan.
I Nomi di Luogo del Comune di Filattiera. By Pietro Settimo Pasquali. Pp. 320. Price, 30.00 l.

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